# PPMC MAGAZINE

SOUTH AFRICA

PHOTOGRAPHY, PAGEANTRY, MODELING AND COMPETITIONS

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**Christa Potgieter**

**Miss Grand South Africa 2025 Finalist**

**Mbabi Mudau**

**Erianca Pelser**

**Thembi Ndlovu**

Issue 142

*Featuring* **National & International** *Models*

**Mrs. South Africa 2025 Semi-finalists**

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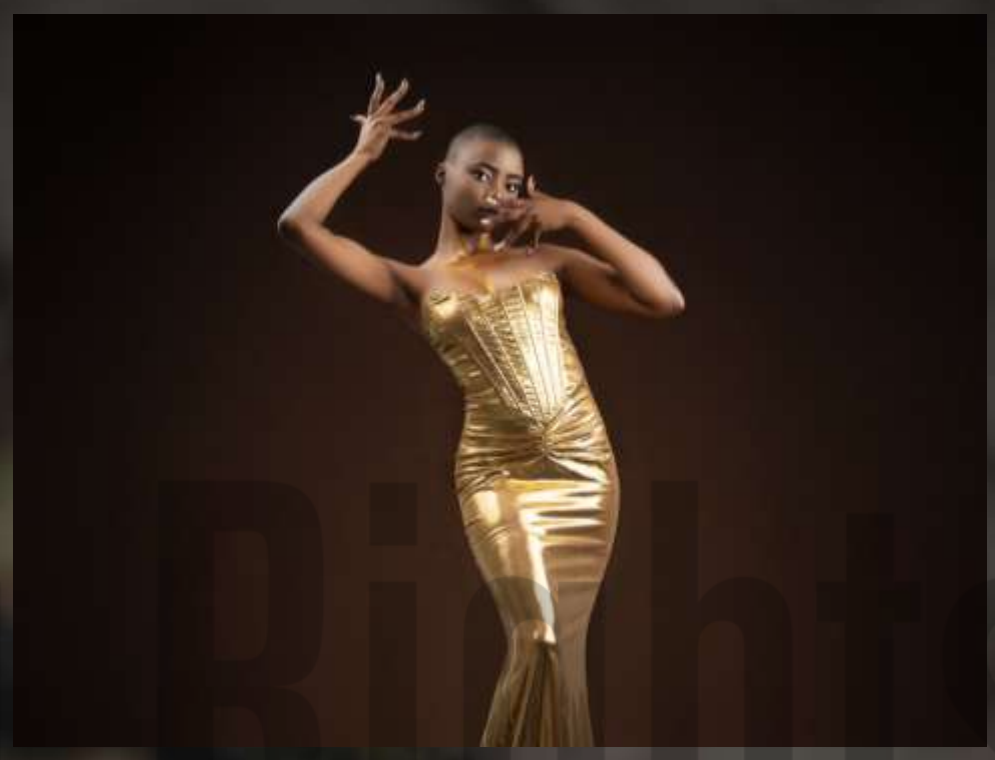

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PHOTOGRAPHY, PAGEANTRY, MODELING AND COMPETITIONS

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# Meet Braylon Larnè Gallant

## Miss Grand Supreme Port Elizabeth 2025

A story by:
Etaiya Briscoe

Facebook: Braylon Gallant
Instagram: @braylon.gallant
TikTok: @braylongallant

At just 18 years old, Braylon Larnè Gallant is already making her mark in the modeling industry. Holding the titles of Miss Grand Supreme Port Elizabeth 2025 and Miss Melkfees 2025, she is determined to challenge beauty standards and inspire others to embrace their uniqueness.

*"I was raised in a family that idealized good grades and athleticism, but being on the bigger side growing up, I had to make academics my strength," she shares. As a child, she was often teased for not fitting into the conventional mold of what a girl was "supposed" to look like. "I never understood how people got bullied for their genetics.*

It's something completely out of their control." For years, she begged her parents to let her model, and when her mother finally agreed, she took the chance to reclaim her narrative. "I wanted to embrace my features and use them to my advantage. Modeling became a way to challenge traditional beauty standards and inspire others to do the same." Braylon's motivation comes from young girls who share similar struggles. "What drives me the most are the little girls who look like me or come from where I come from, believing they don't have the potential to reach their dreams. I want to be a beacon of hope for them," she explains. One of her biggest goals for 2025 is to compete in a national competition, which would help her reach a larger audience and catch the attention of international scouts. "The dream is to walk the world's most famous runways."

Her journey, however, has not been without challenges. "The biggest struggle I've faced is with my self-esteem. You put in so much work, train for hours, perfect your walk, and then the results don't always go your way. It's hard not to feel like you weren't good enough," she admits. Learning to separate her worth from competition outcomes has been crucial. "I realized that one competition does not define me. Whatever is meant to be, will be."

A key influence in her life has been Llewellyn Barnard, owner of Supreme Modelling Academy. "He has been my mentor since day one, long before I even joined the academy. He saw something in me that I never saw in myself," she says. Through his guidance, she has grown both professionally and personally. "He always tells me to remember my 'why' because that's what keeps you going when you feel like giving up."

Braylon has received formal training at Supreme Modelling Academy, where she has learned valuable lessons beyond the runway. "Modeling isn't just about looking good and knowing how to walk. It teaches you confidence, how to interact with others, and how to handle rejection. This industry is tough, but it's what you make of it. If you take everything too seriously, you'll end up miserable. I've learned to take every milestone as a lesson and to just have fun. Life is too serious to take everything so seriously."

Outside of modeling, Braylon describes herself as adventurous. "I'm at my happiest when I'm at the beach. There's no serenity like it. I love spending time with my loved ones, even if we aren't doing much." She is also an advocate for planning. "If I've made plans, everything must be sorted out in advance, or I might just freak out a bit." Her approach to health and wellness is practical. "Dancing has been my way of staying active, and it's been a passion of mine for six years. I also try to get at least seven hours of sleep every night. Recently, I've started seeing a dietician to help me maintain a balanced diet. Being anaemic, I have to listen to my body and take care of it properly."

*Networking has played a significant role in her career. "It's crucial in this industry. It can lead to new opportunities, bookings, and growth. Attending events, volunteering, creating a social media presence, and collaborating with others have all helped me connect with the right people."*

Social media has also been a game-changer for her. "It's how my modeling journey started. By entering online competitions, I was scouted for one of the biggest competitions in the country. It has allowed industry professionals to reach out to me for brand deals and photoshoots. I also use it to share my achievements and help others just starting out."

For aspiring models, Braylon has one key piece of advice: "Enter everything, try everything. You never know what door will open for you. You miss 100% of the shots you don't take. And don't get discouraged when things don't go your way. What is meant for you will find you. Whatever God has set out for you, no one can take that away."

Looking ahead, she plans to use her platform for a greater cause. "I've always stood for advocating for those who feel unheard. That's why I plan to become an attorney, to fight for those who can't fight for themselves. In modeling, I want to do more work for underprivileged communities. Many young people dream of modeling but don't have the resources. Instead of them coming to us, I want to be able to go to them."

Her message to those who look up to her is simple yet powerful: "If you're not changing it, you're choosing it. That applies to everything—relationships, circumstances, personal growth. Don't settle. You deserve more, and you are worth so much more."

# Chenell

## Rising Teen Model Embraces Dreams & Growth

Photo credit: Sielsgeluk Photography
MUA: Arise & Shine Artistry
Styling: b-U Models South Africa

#Model

# Interview with Chenell Maidment

## b-U Models South Africa

At just 17 years old, Chenell Maidment is quickly becoming a name to watch in the modeling world. A learner from Bela Bela and signed with b_u_models, Chenell is a young woman who never imagined a career in front of the camera until her father convinced her to give it a shot. Today, she's steadily building a successful modeling career, and the opportunities just keep coming.

*"Modeling wasn't something I always wanted to do," Chenell says, reflecting on how her journey began. "Up until three years ago, I didn't even think about it. It was my dad who convinced me to try it, and I'm so grateful he did."*

Chenell vividly recalls her first photo shoot, admitting it wasn't as glamorous as it seemed from the outside. "It was very stressful at first, but after a while, I started to enjoy it," she shares. Like many newcomers to the industry, Chenell faced nerves and pressure, but the experience was a valuable learning opportunity. "You grow, you learn, and eventually, you love it," she adds.

*Over the course of her modeling career, Chenell has gathered a wealth of advice, but the one that resonates the most with her is simple yet powerful: "Be a rose in a field of daisies." This quote encourages her to embrace her individuality and stand out in a sea of models. "It's all about being unique and staying true to who you are," Chenell explains.*

Throughout her journey, she's been fortunate to work on some exciting projects. "I've enjoyed working at expos like Sondela's Buitelug Expo and The Pos Koerant's recent event," Chenell says, smiling as she recalls the vibrant energy at these events. But, as with any career, modeling comes with its own set of challenges.

"Every project comes with its own challenges," she notes. "I just focus on how to handle them the best I can." It's clear that for Chenell, staying adaptable is key to navigating the ups and downs of the industry. Looking ahead, Chenell has big aspirations. "I would love to be part of a music video or walk the runway at a major event," she reveals. While she's already accomplished a lot, there's still a lot more she dreams of achieving in the modeling world.

A typical week for Chenell consists of balancing her schoolwork with modeling responsibilities. "My days mostly revolve around school and self-study," she says. But when she has time off, she likes to unwind in ways that make her feel good.

"In my spare time, I practice music and try to get in some exercise," she explains. While fitness isn't her top priority, she knows that staying active plays a role in her overall health. "I do a quick full-body workout every afternoon and try to get some cardio in by walking around the block on weekends," Chenell shares.

Taking care of her skin is also part of her routine. "I wash my face twice a day with face wash and apply day and night cream," she says. It's a simple regimen, but one that helps her feel fresh and ready to take on the world.

*When it comes to music, Chenell has a clear preference. "I'm into calm and relaxing music, like classical music pieces," she reveals. "They help me relax and clear my mind." For someone with a busy schedule, finding peace in music is essential for maintaining balance.*

Chenell's personal style is another area where she embraces creativity and change. "My style is very unique and changes every week," she says with a smile. "It all depends on my mood and the weather. I like to choose pants first and use that as my inspiration for the rest of the outfit." This approach shows how much she values self-expression and how her clothing choices reflect her ever-evolving personality.

What truly makes Chenell happy, though, is music. "Playing piano and guitar makes me feel instantly better," she says. "I could sit in front of a piano for hours. It's my therapy." Music is her escape, her way of expressing herself beyond modeling. She also enjoys playing mobile games with her friends, a fun and lighthearted way to unwind after a busy day.

If she weren't pursuing a modeling career, Chenell says she'd be interested in working in hospitality. "If I weren't a model, I'd like to have some kind of job in hospitality," she shares, revealing her love for helping people and creating a positive atmosphere for others.

*Looking forward, Chenell has some big goals for her future. "I want to improve my modeling skills, travel the world, and hopefully one day open up my own cute little café," she says with a hint of excitement in her voice. It's clear that she has a bright future ahead of her, both in the world of modeling and beyond.*

Chenell Maidment's journey is just beginning, and with her passion, talent, and determination, there's no telling where it will take her. But one thing is for sure: whatever the future holds, Chenell is ready to take it on with a smile and a sense of adventure.

Photo credit: Leandi Oosthuizen, MUA: Palesa Nhlapho, Venue: WH de Klerk School, Dogs: K9 Elite Protection Academy, Emalahleni, Styling: b-U Models South Africa

# Mrs South Africa 2025 Semi-finalist

*Wendy van Zyl*

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You don't need a title, a perfect plan, or all the resources in the world to start making a difference.

#Pageant

# Interview with Wendy van Zyl

## Mrs. South Africa 2025 Semi-finalist

Facebook: Wendy van Zyl
Instagram: @Wendy_vee_zee

At 54 years old, Wendy van Zyl decided to take a leap of faith and enter the Mrs. South Africa 2025 competition. "This is literally a 'now or never' situation," she says. "I don't get a do-over—the cutoff age is 55, and I turn 55 in a month." For Wendy, this journey is about more than just personal achievement. "I wanted to show my two boys that stepping out of your comfort zone, taking risks, and being vulnerable can lead to incredible things. Hard work, perseverance, and a little bit of grit can take you further than you ever imagined."

As a semi-finalist, Wendy has found the experience to be deeply affirming. "Leadership isn't about titles; it's about impact. True leadership means stepping up, showing up, and lifting others as you rise," she shares. "I've met incredible women who are using their voices and platforms to inspire, empower, and create real change. Empowerment isn't just about personal success—it's about making space for others to thrive too."

Wendy is passionate about giving back, and her community work is at the heart of her Mrs. South Africa journey. She recently began working with Westbrook Retirement Village and is already planning fundraising initiatives. "What has struck me is how much of a difference you can make by just showing up with a willing heart," she says. "We have plans for May, including a Dine and Dance fundraiser in collaboration with Spice Restaurant, as well as a sunrise yoga and breathwork session." Her involvement with Haven of Rest orphanage stems from her deep compassion for children. "As a mom of two boys, the thought of any child without parents, love, support, food, or shelter is absolutely heart-wrenching. Every child deserves to feel safe, cared for, and valued," she says. Wendy is working on a fundraiser where a portion of the proceeds will support the orphanage, and she has also initiated a clothing drive with Spice Restaurant as the collection point.

Balancing family, work, and community service is no small task, but Wendy manages it with determination. "Balancing personal life, work, and community service isn't always easy, but my secret is simple—I work hard. I prioritise what matters, stay organised, and make sure that whatever I commit to, I give it my all," she explains. "Being a wife, a mom, and giving back to my community all matter to me, so I make time to make it work. Whether it means early mornings, late nights, or just staying focused on my purpose, I do what it takes."

One of the most touching moments for Wendy has been seeing the generosity of others. "When I opened up about the Haven of Rest fundraiser and clothing drive, people immediately wanted to help. It reaffirmed that kindness is contagious, and when you put yourself out there, the world responds in the most beautiful ways."

*For Wendy, pageantry is about much more than the crown. "Women in pageantry have a unique platform that allows us to inspire and uplift others. By giving back, we show that success isn't just about personal achievement but about using our voice and resources to help those in need," she says. "Giving back strengthens our communities and reminds us of the responsibility that comes with being in the spotlight."*

Working with both the elderly and orphaned children has given Wendy a deeper understanding of the power of kindness. "A simple conversation, a hug, or just being there can bring light into someone's life," she reflects. She believes the Mrs. South Africa platform can help her expand her reach. "This platform provides a stage where my voice can reach further, my message can be louder, and my impact can be greater."

Looking ahead, Wendy hopes to advance further in the competition and continue making a difference. "If I advance further, I hope to use this incredible platform to create real, lasting change in the lives of those who need it most. I will continue with my philanthropic efforts, particularly in supporting the elderly and orphaned children, by raising awareness, mobilizing resources, and inspiring others to get involved."

Her biggest source of inspiration and support has been her family. "My husband, Paul, my two boys, Sebastian and Malcolm, my sister, Sherryl, and my goddaughter, Tandyn, have been my rock. They are brutally honest with their feedback and keep me humble and grounded."

For Wendy, success is about more than just winning a title. "I define success as showing up fully, embracing your journey, and using this platform to inspire and uplift others. It's about personal growth, pushing past my fears, and proving to myself and others that we are capable of more than we think." Her message to other women is simple. "You don't need a title, a perfect plan, or all the resources in the world to start making a difference—what you need is heart, courage, and the willingness to take the first step!"

If she wins Mrs. South Africa 2025, Wendy plans to use the title to expand her charitable efforts. "I will leverage the exposure, partnerships, and resources that come with the crown to grow my efforts in supporting my charities. I also see the title as a way to inspire other women to step into their power and recognize that they too can create change in their communities.

Ultimately, my goal is to leave a lasting legacy. Mrs. South Africa carries a massive responsibility, and I plan to use this platform to ensure that kindness, empowerment, and service continue long after my reign."

Kelly Forsyth

#Pageant

# Interview with Kelly Forsyth

## Mrs. South Africa 2025 Semi-finalist

Instagram: @k_kells
Facebook: @kelsforsyth1
TikTok: @kellykelsf

Kelly Forsyth is not just a Mrs. South Africa 2025 semi-finalist—she is a woman on a mission. With a passion for self-acceptance and empowerment, she entered the competition to use her voice and platform to inspire others. "I believe in being a woman of influence—one who leads with authenticity and inspires others," she says.

*For Kelly, this journey is more than just a competition; it is an opportunity to show women that their value is not determined by societal expectations but by their unique stories and strength.*

Authenticity is at the heart of her advocacy. "It's about embracing who you truly are—your strengths, your imperfections, and everything in between—without filtering yourself to fit a mold," she explains. In a world shaped by social media's unrealistic standards, she believes authenticity is key to overcoming self-doubt and comparison. "It allows women to own their power, build confidence, and live a life that feels true to them."

For Kelly, self-empowerment begins with setting boundaries, speaking up, and surrounding oneself with uplifting people. "Personal growth starts with self-awareness—understanding your worth, refusing to shrink yourself for others, and investing in things that nurture your mind and spirit." She knows firsthand the struggles that come with self-doubt. Growing up in a financially challenged background, she learned independence but also felt the pressure to prove her worth. "I struggled with body image and comparison, constantly measuring myself against unrealistic ideals. Over time, I realized that true empowerment comes from embracing my individuality."

She believes that the impact of women in society is strengthened when they support and uplift one another rather than compete. "Society changes when strong, confident women take up space in leadership, business, and communities. Mrs. South Africa provides a platform for women to be seen, heard, and celebrated, proving that beauty and strength come in many forms."

As a semi-finalist, she is committed to using this platform to have real conversations about self-worth, body image, and the power of authenticity. "Through social media, speaking engagements, and mentorship, I want to encourage women to embrace who they are without fear."

She understands the challenges many women face with self-doubt and societal pressures. "Your worth is not determined by how well you fit into society's expectations. You are enough exactly as you are. The moment you stop seeking approval and start embracing your uniqueness, you unlock a level of confidence that is unshakable."

*Empowerment, for her, is about making choices that align with her values, prioritizing well-being, and using her voice unapologetically. "It's the small, consistent actions—setting boundaries, choosing kindness over comparison, and lifting others up—that create lasting change."*

One of her biggest influences has been her sister, Roelien Brakhoven, who embodies strength and self-acceptance. "She has played a profound role in shaping my views on authenticity and inspires me to embrace my individuality without fear." She believes the biggest barrier preventing women from stepping into their full potential is fear. "Fear of judgment, failure, or not being 'enough' holds so many women back. This can be changed by shifting the narrative—encouraging women to take risks, fail forward, and redefine success on their own terms. Seeing other women break barriers gives others the courage to do the same."

*The most rewarding part of her journey so far has been the realization that self-acceptance is the most powerful tool. "This journey has shown me that you don't need money, status, or external validation to chase your dreams—what truly matters is belief in yourself. When you embrace who you are, doors start to open."*

If she wins the title, her first focus will be on promoting authenticity in a world shaped by social media. "I want to create workshops and online content that address body dysmorphia, self-doubt, and the unrealistic standards placed on women. My goal is to help women embrace their true selves, free from comparison and societal pressure."

Looking ahead, she hopes to leave behind a legacy of confidence and empowerment. "I want to be remembered as a woman who encouraged others to step into their power. If I can help just one woman embrace who she is and see her own worth, then I have fulfilled my purpose."

For women who want to step into their power but don't know where to start, she offers this advice: "Start by believing in yourself—before anyone else does. You don't need a big budget or a camera crew to chase your dreams—just courage, determination, and self-belief.

Speak kindly to yourself, embrace your uniqueness, and take small, consistent actions every day. Your power isn't something you have to find—it's already within you. You just have to own it."

# Tyra Thomas

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*Miss Teen Charm South Africa*

Instagram: @tyra.c.thomas
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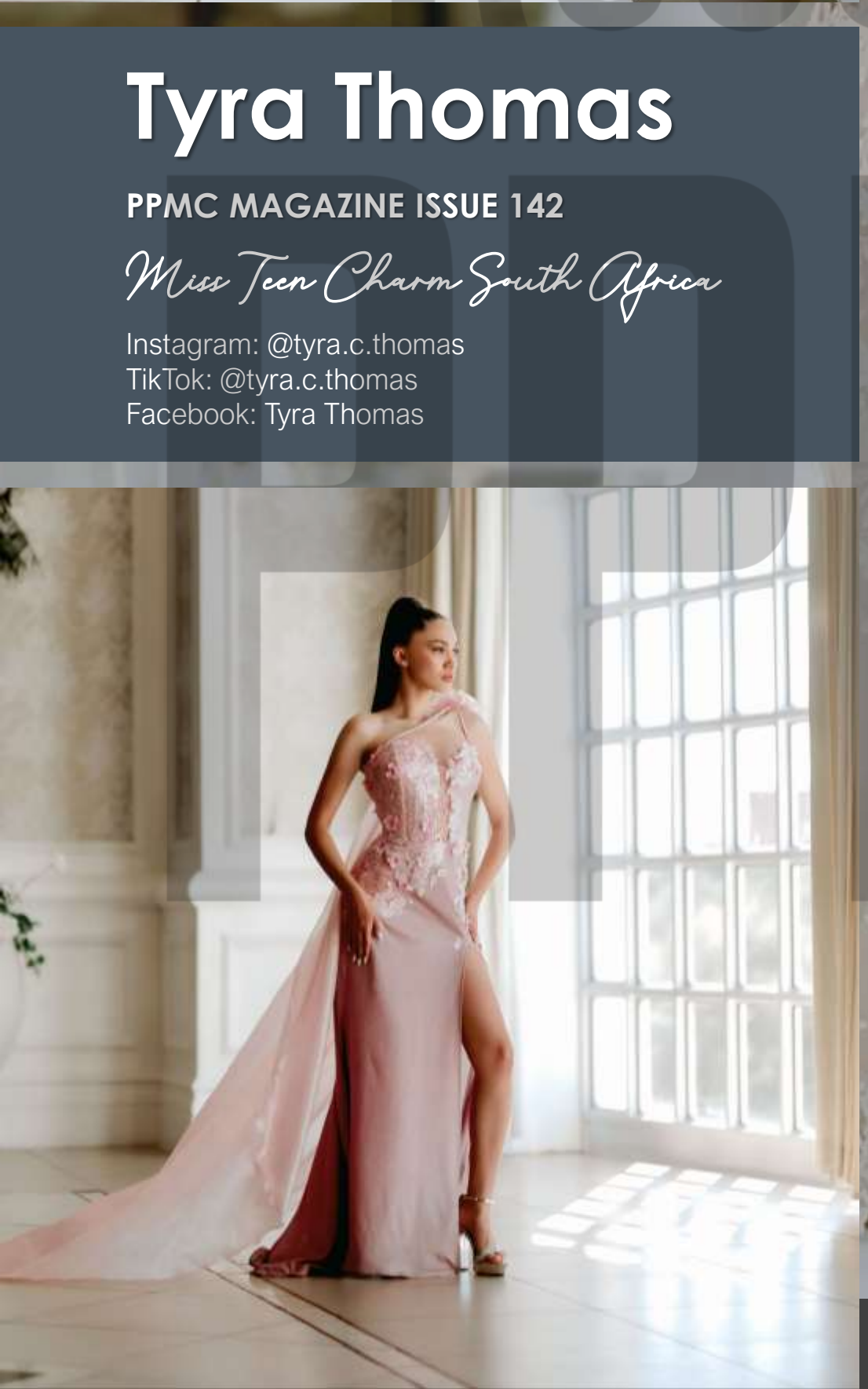

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#Pageant

# Introducing Tyra Calista Thomas

## Miss Teen Charm South Africa 2025

Hailing from the sun-drenched city of Port Elizabeth, also known as Gqeberha, Tyra Calista Thomas is an aspiring model who is steadily making her mark in the fashion world. With an unwavering passion for her craft, Tyra is diligently carving a path to stardom, driven by a dream of becoming a top model. From a young age, her love for modelling has been nurtured with gratitude, guiding her every step closer to her ultimate goal.

*Throughout her journey, Tyra has had the privilege of collaborating with diverse clients and creative minds, bringing their visions to life while captivating audiences in every project. To her, modelling is not merely a profession but a reflection of her dedication, artistry, and ambition.*

From the early days of her childhood, Tyra's fascination with modelling was apparent. Recalling fond memories, she remembers how her grandmother affectionately called her "Tyra Banks," a playful nod to the famous supermodel. As she grew older, those around her began to notice her potential, often encouraging her to pursue modelling, with many predicting she could follow in the footsteps of Tyra Banks herself. These early affirmations sparked a deep passion that has only grown over the years.

One particularly significant moment in her journey occurred when Tyra's aunt, Monique, an aspiring photographer, asked her to pose for photos. At that time, Monique was practicing her craft as she worked toward establishing her photography business. The experience of being in front of the camera and seeing her aunt's artistic vision unfold left a lasting impression on Tyra. "It felt like home," she recalls. Monique, who is now one of the top wedding photographers in the region, played a pivotal role in shaping Tyra's path, and Tyra credits her aunt for much of her early growth in the industry.

Despite her growing passion for modelling, Tyra faced resistance from her father, who was initially opposed to the idea. However, in June 2022, Tyra received an unexpected opportunity when a modelling school and agency scouted her. She saw this as a sign that her dreams were within reach and that God had a plan for her. While she did not sign with that agency, in January 2023, she made the pivotal decision to join Sophisticate Models, a step that would significantly propel her career forward. Tyra's modelling journey has been shaped by the mentorship of several key figures, including Aunty Gail and Teacher Cayleigh. These two women have played an instrumental role in her development, not only as a model but as an individual. Their guidance, belief, and continued support have helped her grow in ways she never imagined.

Initially drawn to commercial and photographic modelling, Tyra's journey took an exciting turn when she discovered her love for pageantry. In her first year with Sophisticate Models, Tyra achieved a remarkable milestone, winning the Top Model of the Year 2023 Photographic award. This accolade validated her passion for being in front of the camera and further fueled her ambitions.

In 2024, Tyra continued to build on her successes, winning the prestigious titles of Miss East Cape Teen 2024 Top Debutante Winner and Miss East Cape Teen 2024 Senior Winner. This marked the beginning of her journey into pageantry, an area she had never considered before but soon found herself deeply passionate about. Determined to explore the world of pageantry on a national and international level, Tyra entered Miss Teen Universe South Africa 2025. Her efforts were rewarded when she was named a semi-finalist and, later, a finalist in August 2024.

The pinnacle of her pageant journey occurred on March 23, 2025, at the grand gala event held at Sun Meropa Hotel in Polokwane, where Tyra was crowned Miss Teen Universe South Africa Eastern Cape and Miss Teen Charm South Africa. These prestigious titles granted her the incredible opportunity to represent South Africa on the international stage later in the year. Tyra was overwhelmed with emotion, grateful for the honor and excited to carry her country's flag with pride and respect.

Tyra's love for modelling continues to grow each day. She finds joy in the supportive community among models, where they learn from each other, form lasting friendships, and uplift one another. This camaraderie aligns perfectly with Tyra's own personality, as she thrives on meeting new people and building connections. In addition to her pageantry achievements, Tyra has worked as a commercial model with a range of diverse brands since 2023.

Among her notable campaigns is the reopening of the Bamboo Gardens wedding venue, a place with sentimental value to her, as it is where her parents were married 20 years ago. She has also worked with brands such as SAMIL, Thunzi Bush Lodge, Tekkie Town, and Vita Teach, further cementing her place in the industry.

Tyra lives by the empowering quote, "The cure for self-doubt is achievement," and the biblical passage, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13), which continues to guide her through challenges and triumphs alike.

A heartfelt thank you goes to Tyra's parents, Ryan and Caron, and her sister, Taylor, whose unwavering love, guidance, and support have been instrumental in shaping her into the person she is today. She also expresses her gratitude to her extended family, friends, and mentors, including her "village" of supporters who continue to encourage and uplift her.

Looking to the future, Tyra is far from finished. With her eyes set on becoming a diverse top model, she hopes to one day sign with renowned agencies like Ice Models or Boss Models and pursue international opportunities with big brands. Her ultimate goal is to grace the pages of prestigious magazines like Vogue, a dream that, while distant, will come to fruition through hard work and perseverance. Tyra's journey is just beginning, and she is determined to continue working toward her dreams, earning her degree, and opening her own business along the way.

For Tyra, beauty is not just skin deep. "Beauty is not about the outside, as you can change your appearance, but about the inside—how well you stick to your morals, treat others, and carry yourself as a person," she says, embodying the essence of grace and strength that defines her both in front of the camera and in life.

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# Interview with Verushka Singh

## Mrs. South Africa 2025 Semi-finalist

Instagram: @Verushka_c
Facebook: Verushka Singh

Verushka Singh has many titles but identifies as a human being with a purpose. At 39 years old, she is a Mrs. South Africa 2025 semi-finalist, an advocate for well-being, and a dedicated climate change expert. Living in Steyn City, Johannesburg, her journey has been shaped by both professional ambition and personal challenges, and she hopes to use her platform to inspire other women to embrace their full potential.

*"Growing up, I had a deep appreciation for the sciences, which led me to study Chemical Engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand.*

*I wanted to be part of the solution to climate change, and for the past 14 years, I've worked in climate change consulting, finding ways to make a real impact,"* she says. Her career has been dedicated to addressing global environmental challenges, but her life is much more than just her profession.

She is also a mother, navigating the complexities of raising a son while managing a demanding career. "Motherhood is a beautiful journey of personal growth. My son has unique needs, and managing his growth with my work has taught me patience and resilience. Like many women, I have faced personal struggles, but those experiences have shaped my perspective on life," she explains. Self-care and personal growth have become key aspects of her journey, and now, through Mrs. South Africa, she wants to bring those conversations to the forefront.

"I am not only an engineer or wife and mother. I am a woman who has faced adversity and emerged stronger. The Mrs. South Africa pageant is a way for me to celebrate my journey and show that women can succeed in their careers, personal lives, and still have space for self-expression," she shares.

More than just a beauty pageant, the platform represents an opportunity for collective growth. For Verushka, that means raising awareness about personal and planetary well-being and empowering women who juggle multiple roles.

Her decision to enter the pageant was not just about personal growth, but also about sending a message. "Women are often placed into boxes—mother, professional, caregiver. But we are so much more than that. I want to show that we can thrive in all aspects of our lives without being defined by just one role and most importantly take care of ourselves," she states.

Verushka sees a deep connection between her work in climate change and her personal journey. "In climate change, resilience is key. We have to adapt and find solutions to global challenges. The same applies to life. I've had to develop resilience in difficult times—whether it was overcoming obstacles, managing work and motherhood, or facing personal struggles," she explains.

She believes that resilience is about acknowledging challenges, finding strength in adversity, and continuing to push forward. "Just like we take action to protect our environment, we also need to take steps to protect our emotional and mental well-being.

Challenges will come, but they don't define us—how we rise from them does." Through Mrs. South Africa, she hopes to create real impact. "Well-being is often overlooked, especially for women who are expected to handle everything. I want to open conversations, reduce stigma, and encourage women to prioritize self-care. Seeking help is not a weakness—it's a strength," she emphasizes. She is equally passionate about sustainability.

"Climate change affects everyone, and we need to balance economic development with environmental preservation. I hope to inspire women to take action in their own communities, whether through small lifestyle changes or larger advocacy efforts," she says.

*Mrs. South Africa provides her with a platform to be a voice for those who often go unheard. "Women face daily struggles, but we can still thrive. We should support one another, embrace our unique journeys, and rise despite challenges."*

Her message to young girls and women is simple but powerful: "You have the right to dream, to succeed, and to prioritize yourself. Don't let anyone tell you what you can or can't do. Challenges will come, but they don't define you—how you respond to them does. Surround yourself with people who support you and never stop believing in yourself."

For Verushka, motivation comes from knowing that every challenge is an opportunity for growth. "Setbacks are temporary, and every challenge teaches us something valuable. Staying positive is about surrounding yourself with the right people, focusing on gratitude, and practicing self-care."

As a Mrs. South Africa semi-finalist, she hopes to inspire others to find strength, embrace their journeys, and make a difference. "We can navigate our careers, our families, and our passions. It's about loving who you are, being kind, finding strength, pushing forward, and lifting others along the way."

*Her journey is far from over, but one thing is certain—Verushka Singh is determined to leave a lasting impact.*

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# Robyn

## Empowered by Faith, Passion, and Purposeful Teaching

Photo credit: Kingdom Standard Productions
Facebook: Robyn-Leigh Michaela Cowie
TikTok: @robyncowie
Modeling School: TMA Models EC

#Model

# Robyn-Leigh Michaela Cowie

## A Passion for Growth and Inspiration

A story by:
Etaiya Briscoe

Robyn-Leigh Michaela Cowie's journey into modeling has been driven by a deep-seated passion that she rediscovered last year. "I'd previously done modeling when I was a bit younger, so I've always had the passion in me.

It just died along the way, but since last year, I decided to continue doing it and finally joined an agency this year," she says. Since joining TMA Models EC, she has experienced a transformation. "The experience has been amazing because while I'm doing the classes, I can feel my self-confidence coming back. Meeting new people makes it even more enjoyable."

Her journey has not been without challenges. Overcoming low self-esteem was a personal battle, but she found strength in faith and self-affirmation. "Speaking positive things to myself, believing in myself, and trusting what the Word of God says about me helped me. Having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is the foundation of self-confidence and where it all starts."

TMA Models Ec played a major role in her growth, providing a safe and encouraging space. "The teachers are supportive, and they have this motivating thing where they speak life into us. They allow us to make mistakes without feeling bad because we all learn through mistakes." Beyond modeling, Robyn-Leigh has a strong passion for education. She has always excelled in languages and believes this is due to a strong reading foundation from a young age.

"I've always been very good in my languages at school, and I realized it's because I had a good foundation of reading. That made me achieve excellent marks, and now I can help other students perform just as well." Life Orientation is another area of interest for her. "It's about being aware of yourself and your surroundings. It teaches you the dangers of society and how to cope with daily stress."

Her experience during her first-year teaching practical solidified her passion. "There was a Grade 9 class that was always a problem at this school, but somehow, I always found myself enjoying that specific class.

My mentor teacher noticed how calm they were when I was there and told me to sit in whenever she had them because they listened when I was present. That's when I realized that where people see a problem, I always try to see the good in it. For students like that, you need patience and compassion, and that reinforced my passion even more for education."

One of the biggest challenges she faces with aftercare tutoring is reading difficulties among learners. "I noticed learners really struggle with reading, and that is the main problem in our schools today. So, I took it upon myself to allow my kids to read every day, even if it's just one page. It makes a whole difference, and I see improvement daily."

She believes that creating a safe and supportive environment for students is key. "It's important to make them feel seen and heard because they come from different backgrounds, and not everyone has the same support system. If I can be that for them, it would make a world of difference. Learners function better in a safe environment." Seeing their progress is her greatest reward. "The improvement I see daily and how they excel in their schoolwork motivates them to do better. It aligns with my personal values because I believe in never giving up—daily practice makes perfect."

Confidence-building plays a major role in her own life and in how she teaches. "I speak life into myself daily and allow God to lead me in everything I do. I instill this in my students by telling them there's nothing they cannot do. There is no such thing as 'I can't' because you can do anything you set your mind to."

Her goals in both modeling and education are ambitious. "I would like to be recognized by brands in the modeling industry and maybe even enter Miss South Africa one day. In my education career, I want to be a positive role model to my students and inspire them to be anything in life. I want them to understand that they don't have to think one-dimensionally—they can do multiple things because the world is full of opportunities."

Robyn-Leigh finds inspiration in both industries. "In modeling, Jasmine Tookes from Victoria's Secret and Natasha Joubert, Miss South Africa 2023, inspire me. In education, my high school teachers, Mr. De Vos and the late Mr. Petrus from Uitenhage High Secondary School, made an impact on me. They always went the extra mile for their students."

Her message to young individuals is one of self-empowerment. "Block out the negative opinions of others because the only opinion that matters is that of Jesus and yourself. You are the narrator of your life, and you get to decide what you allow in and what you don't."

As for the legacy she hopes to leave behind, Robyn-Leigh wants to be remembered as someone who made a difference. "I want to have made a positive impact in everyone's life that I came in contact with. I want to be remembered as someone who always spoke life into people."

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# Madelaine Snyman

**PPMC MAGAZINE ISSUE 142**

*Fashion and Fearless Pursuits*

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#Inspire

# Interview with Madelaine Snyman

## Fashion and Fearless Pursuits

"Oh my word, there are no words to explain what an extraordinary journey this has been for me!" says Madelaine Snyman, reflecting on her experience as a StarStatus Co-Presenter in 2024. Always dreaming of being in front of the camera, this opportunity fueled her passion and brought immense joy.

*"Being in front of the camera as a presenter opens your eyes to a whole other world," she adds. "I just embraced the experience, eager to learn everything I could. You're never too old to learn, and as they say, knowledge is power!"*

Now, as a judge for StarStatus 2025, Madelaine is eager to witness the transformation of contestants. "Seeing these women take this brave step, even with their hectic schedules, makes me so proud," she says. "I love seeing what they create; you laugh so much watching their ideas come to life. But you have to watch the show to experience it yourself!"

Madelaine's versatility in the fashion and beauty industry has opened numerous doors. Her journey with Lee Cooper SA started when she responded to an Instagram post. "I love their clothing range; it's comfy, soft, and edgy," she says. "When I was chosen as an influencer, I was overwhelmed with joy. Life is about taking chances; otherwise, you'll always wonder, 'what if?' I'm so humbled that they saw potential in me."

Her role as an ambassador for Nails of Note Fourways is one she enjoys immensely. "Oeeweee, they are next level!" she exclaims. "I get the best nails and then do postings for them, tagging them in my events. We don't realize how much we use our hands in work, photoshoots, or events. Beautifully manicured hands are a must!" The staff's friendliness and the quality of work keep her coming back. "As they always say... Affordable luxury, darlings!"

Another brand close to her heart is Asteria Group Holdings, encompassing Asteria Pharmaceuticals, Asteria Aesthetics, and Resa Kahn For The Love Of Beauty. "As a brand ambassador, my job is to genuinely represent and promote these brands by sharing my personal experiences," she explains. "It's all about connecting with people, answering their questions, and showcasing why I believe in what I represent."

Madelaine is particularly passionate about Asteria Aesthetics and BioDermal Skin Tech. "With age, I've come to appreciate a solid skincare routine," she says. "Their products and treatments are transformative! BioDermal Skin Tech offers multipurpose home care that keeps your skin healthy and glowing." She also swears by the ElixHer Collagen Daily Beauty Blend from Résa.K Skin Science, noting significant improvements in her hair, skin, and overall health.

Another game-changer for her is My GoLean, which has helped curb her appetite and improve her exercise routine. "Asteria Group Holdings has catered to every aspect of my well-being, allowing me to look and feel great," she says. "Asteria Aesthetics is pure luxury from start to finish.

*The ambiance, the personalized treatments, everything makes you feel pampered. Their aesthetic doctors truly take the time to listen to your concerns." She credits them for her refreshed, youthful look, thanks to procedures like Botox, fillers, and the Face, Neck, and Eye Renu treatments.*

Balancing multiple brand collaborations requires strategy and discipline, but Madelaine has it all figured out. "My faith is my foundation," she says. "I start every day with prayer, asking for wisdom and blessings. If I don't have enough time, it's a 'Madelaine' problem, as I'm the one organizing my schedule."

She ensures that everything she puts out reflects her personal brand. "I strive for excellence in all I do, staying true to my values. I plan my content weekly and use scheduling apps to save time. Technology is just extraordinary!"

Working with different brands has been deeply rewarding. "Each brand has its own unique vision, pushing me to step out of my comfort zone and think outside the box," she explains. "It's all about growing, gaining knowledge, and building confidence." Madelaine also embraces the glamour of high fashion. Signing up for the New Romantics Couture Ambassador Search was a natural step. "Dressing up, picking jewelry, getting my hair and nails done, and then stepping into the most exquisite gown — who doesn't love that?" she says excitedly. "Nadine of New Romantics Couture has an eye for detail and glamour. She makes you feel feminine and powerful at the same time."

Being a semi-finalist for the 2025 ambassador search is a dream come true. "Stepping into one of Nadine's designer gowns is above and beyond exciting," she says. "It's a surreal moment and a double blessing to work with such a talented designer." She believes her love for fashion and confidence make her a strong contender for the title. "Every day is a fashion show, and the world is your runway," she declares.

*Beyond fashion and beauty, Madelaine uses her platform to inspire others. "I want to show people their own superpower, not mine," she explains. "I stay humble, always learning and reinventing myself. Age is just a number. I believe in showing up, giving my best, and taking every opportunity, even if I have no idea how to do it. I learn, I fail, I try again, and I improve. It's progress, not perfection."*

Her journey is a shining example of passion, perseverance, and the courage to take chances. Whether in front of the camera, collaborating with brands, or stepping onto the fashion stage, Madelaine Snyman continues to inspire with her unstoppable drive and love for what she does.

**Photo credits: Michael Haasbroek, Heck Yes Makeup Artistry, Nails of Note Fourways, Bespoke Hair and Nails Beauty, Asteria Group Holdings, Lee Cooper SA, Willem Botha Beauty, Liezl Nortje Boutique Couture, Dollhouse Emporium SA, BioDermal Skin Tech, Résa.K Skin Science, Rochelle Lammerding, Carel Van Vuuren, Dash Hair & Beauty, New Romantics Couture, Go Brown Mobile Spray Tanning**

# Dr Takeera Hassim

Competing in Mrs. Curve' Globe has been a life-changing experience—one of growth, purpose, and self-discovery. For me, this pageant represents far more than just a title. It is an opportunity to challenge conventional standards of beauty, celebrate inclusivity, and amplify the voices of women who don't always fit into the traditional molds of society. Representing South Africa on an international stage is an incredible honor, as I carry with me the stories, struggles, and triumphs of women who deserve to be seen and heard.

This platform deeply aligns with my passion for empowering women and encouraging self-confidence. It challenges outdated beauty norms and promotes authenticity. As a gynaecologist, I have witnessed how self-esteem profoundly impacts women's health and well-being. Mrs. Curve' Globe allows me to inspire women to embrace their individuality, take control of their narratives, and redefine confidence on their own terms. My medical background has given me a unique understanding of the struggles women face, both physically and emotionally. In my work as a gynecologist, I have become an advocate for women's health, fighting issues like period poverty, improving healthcare access, and breaking stigmas surrounding women's health.

I believe that education and awareness are just as powerful as medical intervention, and I use my platform to bridge these gaps and ensure every woman has access to the care and knowledge she deserves.

One of the initiatives closest to my heart is my work to end period poverty in South Africa. Many young girls miss school simply because they cannot afford sanitary products. I'm passionate about providing affordable, sustainable solutions, such as menstrual cups, and tackling cultural taboos surrounding menstruation. By empowering these girls to stay in school and maintain their dignity, we are giving them the opportunity to pursue their dreams without limitations. In addition to my healthcare work, I became involved with the Gift of the Givers, an organization that delivers aid in disaster-stricken areas. My most memorable experience was working in crisis zones where women had no access to reproductive care.

Despite the dire circumstances, the gratitude I received from these women reaffirmed my commitment to humanitarian medicine. It's in those moments that I truly understand the impact of compassionate healthcare.

Pageants like Mrs. Curve' Globe are important because they challenge society's narrow and unrealistic beauty standards. These platforms show that beauty is diverse, powerful, and unapologetic. They celebrate strength, intelligence, and authenticity—not just size or appearance. Every woman deserves to feel beautiful and valued, no matter what her shape, size, or background may be.

#Pageant

# Interview with Dr Taheera Hassim

## Mrs Curve South Africa 2025

As a woman in medicine, I've faced biases, expectations, and limitations. The same goes for my involvement in pageantry, where plus-size women often face unfair judgment. I've overcome these challenges by staying true to my purpose, remaining confident in my skills, and being determined to change people's perceptions. Success, to me, is proving that women can be multifaceted, powerful, and limitless.

To those struggling with body image or health issues, I want to remind you that your worth is not defined by a number on a scale, a diagnosis, or society's expectations. Real confidence is built from within, and true beauty comes from embracing your body, prioritizing your health, and standing unapologetically in your own power. You are enough, exactly as you are.

Balancing my work in medicine, my humanitarian efforts, and my role in pageantry requires passion and prioritization. I love what I do, and each part of my life fuels the other. I lean on my support system and remind myself that perfection isn't the goal—purpose is.

Leadership, for me, is about service, impact, and creating opportunities for others. I use my platform to mentor young women, advocate for health and education reforms, and challenge the norms that limit women's potential. The goal is to leave the world better than I found it, and I strive every day to do just that. Self-love, to me, is radical acceptance. It's recognizing that you are worthy, capable, and beautiful—without needing external validation. Self-love also means taking care of your body, setting boundaries, and being kind to yourself. When women embrace self-love, they unlock their full potential.

To any women pursuing careers in medicine or advocacy, my advice is simple: You don't have to choose between your passions. You can be a doctor, an advocate, a leader, and anything else you dream of. Start small, use your voice, and never let anyone tell you that you're asking for too much. The world needs more women who break barriers and build bridges.

Looking ahead, my goal for Mrs. Curve' Globe 2025 is clear. I want to inspire global change—advocating for women's health, promoting body positivity, and finding sustainable solutions to period poverty. I aim to be a bold, impactful representative for South Africa, demonstrating that beauty is not only about size or appearance, but about strength, intelligence, and purpose.

My motivation comes from remembering the women I fight for, the girls who need role models, and the causes that matter. Passion drives discipline, and I remind myself daily that I am here to make a difference.

In the next five years, I hope to see:

- Universal access to menstrual products and reproductive healthcare.
- Better representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles.
- More platforms that celebrate body diversity and self-confidence.
- Real change will come through education, policy shifts, and grassroots advocacy. And I am committed to pushing for those changes every step of the way.

Taheera Hassim's journey has been a testament to perseverance, strength, and an unwavering commitment to making a difference. From overcoming personal struggles to excelling as a gynaecologist and humanitarian, she continues to inspire those around her. With numerous degrees and accolades to her name, Taheera remains dedicated to helping others, whether it's through her medical practice or her advocacy work. She has volunteered across Africa, providing aid in disaster zones and working to uplift marginalized communities. Her efforts to combat period poverty and support orphanages in South Africa have earned her admiration as a true changemaker.

Reflecting on her journey, Taheera says, "Breaking barriers has always been part of my story. As a gynecologist, I shattered the glass ceiling long ago. Now, I see the Mrs. Curve' Globe crown as a platform—one to advocate for gender equality, education, healthcare, and sustainability. It's a chance to inspire young women to chase their dreams fearlessly and collaborate with organizations, governments, and businesses to drive meaningful change."

Her focus on advocating for women's health, body positivity, and social justice makes her a standout candidate for Mrs. Curve' Globe, and she's ready to use the stage to make a lasting impact. "Winning this title wouldn't just be a personal achievement; it would be an opportunity to be a catalyst for change on a global scale."

As Taheera continues to break boundaries, she reminds us all of the power of love, compassion, and service—qualities that make her not just a pageant contestant, but a true ambassador of change.

## From Childhood Passion to Beauty Industry Pro

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#Pageant

# Meet Christa Petro Potgieter

## Owner and Founder of Glam Girl

For Christa, the journey into the beauty industry started at a young age. "I was a little girl who loved to cut and style my Barbie dolls' hair and do their makeup," she says with a smile. "Later, I started doing all my friends' hair and makeup for school dances, and that's when I saw my love for it grow." What started as fun with dolls and friends blossomed into a true passion for transforming others through the art of makeup and hairstyling.

That passion led her to pursue formal training in hair and makeup. "After school, I started my studies in Hair and Makeup in 2005. I did three years of college and then an extra year to get my international qualifications," Christa explains. "I now have a Certificate, Diploma, and Advanced Diploma in Hair and Makeup Artistry." This formal education laid the foundation for a career that would bring her to the heart of the beauty industry.

Today, Christa is a professional hair and makeup artist at GlamUp Girl, where she focuses on bringing out the best in her clients. "It's so rewarding to put a happy smile on my clients' faces," she says. "My focus is not to change them so they don't recognize themselves, but to bring out the beautiful features they already have." Whether it's for a wedding, a special event, or just a night out, Christa takes pride in helping her clients feel confident and radiant.

Her approach to makeup and hairstyling is all about enhancement, not transformation. "I have a unique way of using a client's features and enhancing them with makeup and hairstyling," she says. It's not just about the finished look, but about creating a connection with each client and understanding their vision. "I ask them about their likes and dislikes and let them show me an image of what they have in mind. Then, I guide them on what will work best, and we meet in the middle to find the perfect style."

Among the many projects Christa has worked on, some stand out as true highlights in her career. "The year-end dance shows for dance schools in Emalahleni are always a big moment for me. I love doing the girls' stage hair and makeup and seeing my work on stage," she says, reflecting on one of her most rewarding experiences. She has also had the privilege of doing makeup for high-profile events, including the "Miss & Mr. Mpumalanga" pageant in March 2022 and the prestigious "Opulent Top Model 2024" competition.

When it comes to the tools and products Christa swears by, she keeps things simple but effective. "Foundation, setting powder, eyeliner, mascara, and blusher are my go-to essentials," she reveals. These staples help her create flawless looks that can be adapted to any client's needs.

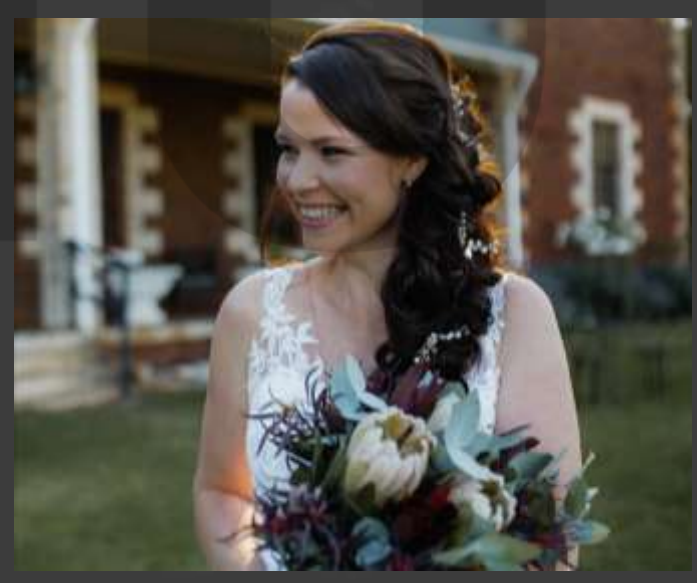
Staying up-to-date with the latest trends is a crucial part of her work. "I make sure to stay updated with the latest trends on social media and attend training sessions. Right now, I'm excited about practicing more men's makeup and natural looks, which are really popular," she says. This commitment to learning and improving ensures that Christa remains at the forefront of the beauty industry and continues to push the boundaries of her craft.

Making sure her clients feel comfortable and confident is one of Christa's top priorities. "I always keep their requests and ideas in mind so they feel in control of their own style," she says. By keeping the client's preferences in the forefront, she ensures that they are happy with the end result and confident in their new look. For anyone thinking about pursuing a career in makeup or hairstyling, Christa has some solid advice: "Stay updated with everything, keep your clients' ideas in mind when you do styling, and always be professional, consistent, and available for appointments."

Balancing creativity with practicality is essential in the fast-paced beauty industry. Christa has mastered this balance, always planning her styles in advance and managing her time efficiently. "I plan my styles upfront and make sure I pace myself properly so I don't fall behind during my bookings," she says. Time management is key to ensuring each client gets the attention they deserve without feeling rushed.

Looking ahead, Christa has big dreams for her future. "One of my biggest career goals is to work with artists and actors and to have my own glam teams to contract out for major events," she shares. She envisions expanding her reach, bringing her unique skills to even larger events and collaborating with the industry's top talent.

For Christa, the most rewarding part of her job is the people she meets. "Meeting new people and seeing how my work makes a difference in their day or special event is what I enjoy the most," she says. "It's all about bringing out the beauty in everything." Whether it's a bride on her wedding day, a performer preparing for a big show, or someone simply getting glammed up for a night out, Christa finds joy in making others feel beautiful, inside and out.



# Miss Grand South Africa 2025 Finalist

*Tara-Linn Mehl*

#Pageant

# Interview with Tara-Linn Mehl

## Miss Grand South Africa 2025 Finalist

Tara-Linn Mehl is no stranger to the world of pageantry. As a finalist for Miss Grand South Africa 2025, she stands on the brink of achieving a dream she has worked toward for years. "When passion meets purpose, that is when magic happens," she says. It is this belief that has driven her to use her skills in filmmaking and music to raise awareness about war and violence, both in South Africa and globally.

Having competed in 2023, Tara-Linn returns to the competition stronger, wiser, and fully prepared for the responsibility of the crown. "Being a finalist in 2025 has been nothing short of amazing. I competed in 2023, and now I have come back braver, stronger, and ready to take on the responsibility."

The journey has required rigorous preparation, much like training for a sport. She focuses on maintaining her physical strength and surrounding herself with supportive people, ensuring she shows up as her best self every day.

*Her story is deeply personal. Born with serious medical complications, Tara-Linn credits the Red Cross War Memorial Hospital for saving her life. "If it was not for them, I would not be standing here today."*

*Understanding the financial struggles the hospital faces, she is using her platform to advocate for donations so that more children can access affordable, if not free, healthcare.*

The road to Miss Grand South Africa has been a long one. "For the past four years, I have dedicated my time to preparing for Miss Grand South Africa and Miss Grand International." Networking within the MGI brand, improving her business, and creating opportunities for other young women have all been part of her journey.

In 2023, she competed but did not win. Yet, 2025 was a calling she could not ignore. "A dream delayed is not a dream denied. I am more prepared than I have ever been. Entering again is backed up by four years of dedicated preparation." One of her biggest inspirations has been Isabella Menin, Miss Grand International 2022. "She is my role model and now my mentor as I take her training sessions with Queen Academy." Another pillar of strength is her partner. "He wishes nothing but the best for me, and for that, I am truly grateful."

With any major competition comes pressure, but Tara-Linn keeps her focus by prioritizing what matters most. "Family is the foundation of everything that I am and the reason I am able to do what I do today. The entertainment industry is tough. You need a lot of support."

One of the greatest challenges she has faced is overcoming self-doubt. "Being surrounded by amazing women with the same dream can be challenging. But I realized that what I bring to the table is special, authentic, and valuable."

If she wins the title of Miss Grand South Africa, her first initiative will be to visit the children at Red Cross War Memorial Hospital and inspire parents facing similar struggles. "When I was a little girl, a lady who had scoliosis surgery spoke about how it did not stop her from becoming a ballerina. I want to share my story and how I have overcome adversity."

Balancing her personal life and pageant life comes naturally to her. "Being Grand has become a part of my everyday life, whether that is through pageantry or self-expression."

She embraces the "4 B's" – Beauty, Body, Brains, and Business. "Inner beauty that shines outward, optimal strength and health to serve others, intelligence to bring in new ideas, and business skills because Miss Grand is a business. The winner should contribute to that aspect."

*As the final night approaches, every day brings her one step closer to achieving her grandest dreams. For Tara-Linn Mehl, Miss Grand South Africa 2025 is more than just a title—it is a platform for change, a symbol of perseverance, and an opportunity to make a lasting impact.*

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# Robyn Hill

#Pageant

# Interview with Robyn Hill

## Miss Grand South Africa 2025 Finalist

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Robyn Hill is no stranger to the world of pageantry. After placing as the 3rd runner-up in Miss Grand South Africa 2023, she knew her journey wasn't over. "On that same night I placed as 3rd runner-up, I told myself I can do it again and I can win," she says with determination. With a renewed mindset and a clear vision, she is back in the competition, ready to claim the title of Miss Grand South Africa 2025.

*Her experience from 2023 has shaped her approach in many ways. "Being unapologetically myself, no matter what! I know I've mentioned this before, but this is really the winning factor, and I would advise this to any other contestant," Robyn shares. Last year, she found herself comparing her performance to others, but this time, she is focused solely on her own growth. "I'm putting all my trust in God alone," she adds.*

Since her last competition, Robyn has undergone significant personal growth. "I've realized that no matter how much I tell myself to do, nothing will work until I actually put the effort in and do it!" she admits. She used to rely on others to help her execute her ideas, but now she takes full responsibility for making things happen herself. This time around, her preparation is different. "I am being more 'Grand Obsessed' if that makes sense," she laughs. "I am much more determined to win the crown and be an ambassador for change!" She also acknowledges the importance of having a strong support system. "Before, I trusted that I'd do well by myself, but realistically, having that extra support and guidance helps so much."

Robyn is already making an impact as the current Miss Grand Amanzimtoti 2025. "I feel honored to represent my town in one of the top five biggest pageants in South Africa." Through her platform, she is advocating for mental health awareness and standing against human trafficking. "I can use this platform to the best of my abilities to bring recognition to my 'Cornerstone for Change' campaign."

Competing at a national level for the first time in 2023 presented challenges. "I wasn't prepared enough, and I didn't know what to expect," she admits. But she has spent all of 2024 researching and preparing for the international stage, determined to be ready for anything.

Her advocacy work is deeply meaningful to her. "I have started a campaign called 'Cornerstone for Change' where I advocate for mental health as well as physical health," she explains. She is also involved with several charities, aiming to show grace through faith and lend a helping hand wherever she can.

Balancing pageantry with her personal and professional life is no easy task. "It has been quite a challenge, especially running my own personal training business," she says. But she stays disciplined and dedicates every spare moment to preparation. "Most of my free time has been spent preparing for this pageant, and I will continue doing so until I reach the international stage."

Robyn's biggest supporter throughout her journey has been her late mother. "She unfortunately passed away on 29 May 2022. I truly believe one of the biggest reasons I never placed in 2023 is because I always felt like something was missing." Now, she has found healing through faith. "In 2025, my biggest supporter has been my fiancé, Ronan Farquharson." What sets Robyn apart from other contestants? "Well, firstly, when you see me, you can tell that I'm in the gym a lot, so physically, I stand out more than the other ladies, which I love!" she says. Beyond that, she believes her personality and determination make her unique.

"My hunger for this crown sets me apart as well, and it's very noticeable." Through pageantry, she has learned an invaluable lesson. "No matter how much you think you are doing, there will always be someone out there doing more!" she reflects. That realization has fueled her drive to keep growing and improving every day.

For first-time contestants, Robyn has straightforward advice. "Do your research, and practice, practice, practice! Always show up with 100% energy, no matter how tired you are, because somewhere, someone is always watching." If she wins the title, her first goal is clear. "The very first thing I'd like to accomplish is announcing myself as the official Miss Grand South Africa 2025 and wearing our beautiful new MGSA floating crown!" she says with excitement.

*Beyond that, she is determined to make an impact on the Grand Family and audience. "I want to show them that South Africa is coming with a flame that won't die down. We are hungry to bring back the first-ever Golden Crown to South Africa!"*

Staying motivated at this level requires strong faith. "Through trusting in God 100%. Every time I doubt myself or think I'm not doing enough, I remind myself that the enemy will always try to destroy something great." Surrounding herself with like-minded, driven individuals helps her stay on course. "I spend time in God's word and with people who share my ambition."

Robyn Hill is not just competing; she is chasing a purpose. With determination, faith, and an unwavering drive, she is ready to take on Miss Grand South Africa 2025 and beyond. "I'm more ready than before, and I know I can do this!"

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# Cover Model

Tinyiko Khoza

# Interview with Tinyiko Khoza

## Uniqueness Through Fashion and Focus

Photo credit: Tee Light Studio
Instagram: @khoza.infinity
Facebook: @Tinyiko Khoza II
TikTok: @infinity_xoxo

Tinyiko Khoza, a 21-year-old model and student from Etwatwa, Gauteng, has always had a passion for creativity, self-expression, and being in front of the camera. "Modelling felt like a natural extension of who I am," Tinyiko says. A Systems Development graduate, she is now a first-year student pursuing a Diploma in Fashion at the Vaal University of Technology, combining her love for fashion and art.

Her modelling journey began unexpectedly. "I secretly joined free modelling classes behind my parents' backs," Tinyiko reveals. Initially hesitant about her decision, her parents were concerned about the uncertain and costly nature of the industry. Over time, however, they began to see her dedication and support her dream.

Reflecting on her early experiences, Tinyiko recalls her first modelling competition in 2019. "It felt very overwhelming. I was nervous and not very confident," she admits. "I kept comparing myself to others and really hoped I would win a title. But even though I didn't win anything that day, I learned something even more important." That lesson was that modelling isn't just about winning; it's about enjoying the moment, learning, and growing. "Every experience helps you grow, whether you win or not."

As she continued her modelling career, Tinyiko faced challenges with self-doubt, particularly about her appearance and a burn mark on her body. "What once felt like a flaw became a symbol of strength, and I've learned to wear it with pride," she says. Modelling, to her, is not just about beauty—it's about confidence, self-acceptance, and inspiring others to embrace their own imperfections.

Known for her natural and expressive style, Tinyiko enjoys portrait photography, where she feels most connected to the camera. "I like to keep things real and use my face and body to tell a story through emotions and poses." She also loves working with brands that support self-love, confidence, and creativity, particularly those that celebrate diversity in beauty.

However, the path has not been without its challenges. "Dealing with rejection was tough at first," Tinyiko admits. "Not every opportunity works out, and it can be hard, but I remind myself that it's not personal. Every 'no' is just part of the journey." Despite her insecurities, particularly surrounding her burn mark, Tinyiko has learned to embrace her uniqueness. "It's made me stronger and more confident in front of the camera."

Confidence in front of the camera is another hurdle, especially during challenging shoots. But Tinyiko focuses on staying present and trusting herself. "I remind myself that every shoot is a chance to grow and learn something new," she shares. "Confidence isn't about being perfect; it's about being comfortable with who I am and embracing the process, even when things don't go as planned."

For Tinyiko, the most rewarding part of modelling is using her platform to express herself and inspire others. "Every time I step in front of the camera or on stage, I feel like I'm telling a story and sharing a part of who I am," she says. The fashion industry has taught her valuable lessons in self-love, patience, and perseverance, which have shaped her personal growth.

Tinyiko draws inspiration from many people in the fashion industry. She admires photographers who capture emotion and tell stories through their images. Designers like David Tlale, Zamaswazi, and Gaurav Gupta inspire her with their boundary-pushing creations. "I love how they embrace diversity and challenge the norms of fashion," she says. She also looks up to influencers such as Anok Yai, Alex Consani, and Mona Tougaard, who advocate for confidence, diversity, and inclusivity.

Balancing modelling with her studies and personal life can be challenging, but Tinyiko has learned to manage her time wisely. "I prioritize my studies and family time because they are both very important to me," she explains. In her downtime, she enjoys watching movies, listening to music, drawing, and spending time outdoors—activities that help her relax and recharge.

Her advice for aspiring models is simple: "Stay true to yourself and enjoy the journey. Don't be afraid to ask questions and learn from others. Be patient, keep improving your skills, and take care of yourself mentally, physically, and emotionally." She reminds young people to focus on building their confidence and learning from each experience, whether it's a photoshoot, runway show, or even a rejection.

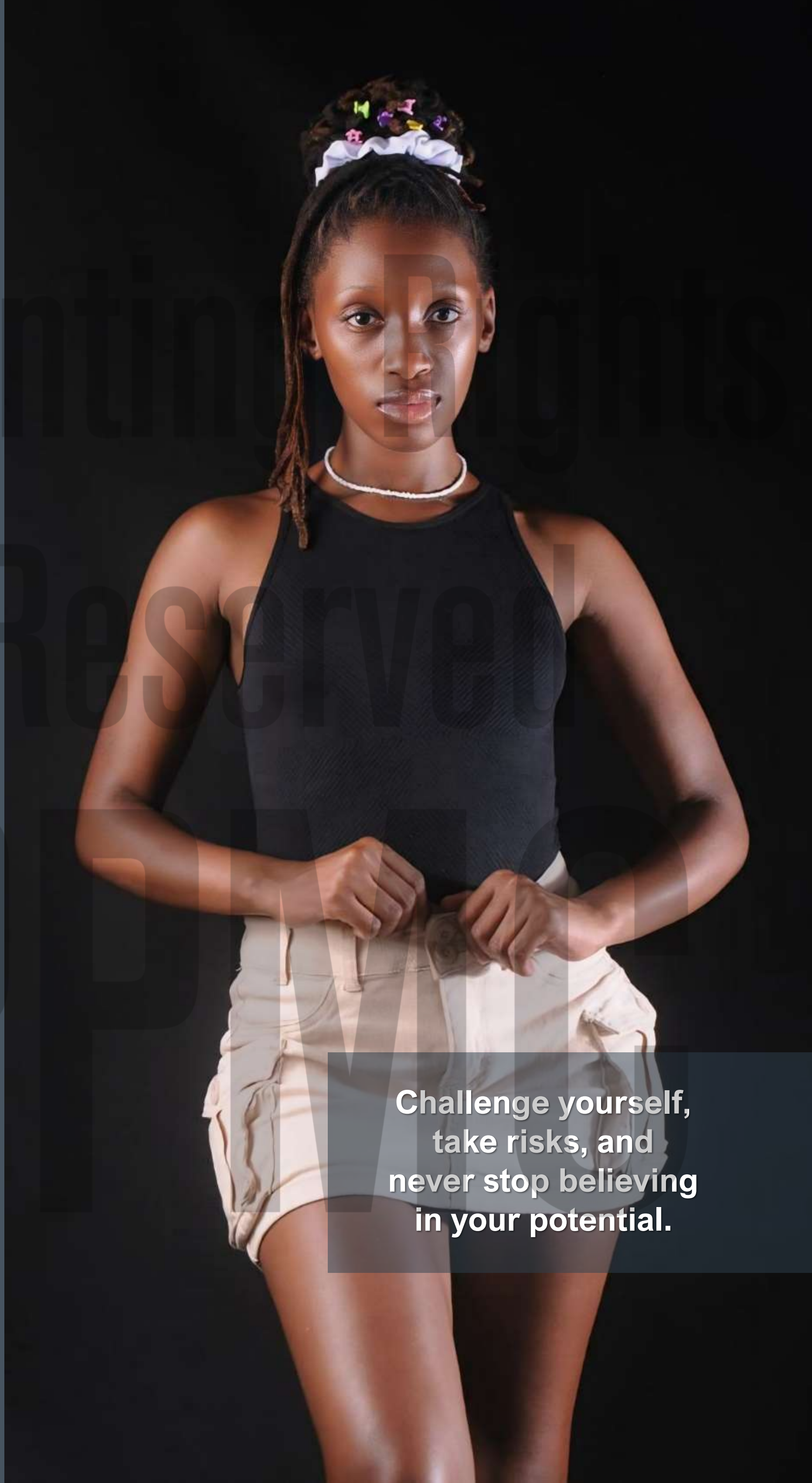
Looking ahead, Tinyiko wants to continue growing as a model while working with brands that reflect her values of diversity and inclusivity. "I hope to be part of campaigns that celebrate these ideals," she says. She also aims to work internationally with photographers and designers who inspire her. In the long term, Tinyiko hopes to use her platform to inspire others, especially young people, to embrace who they are and chase their dreams with confidence.

Outside of modelling, Tinyiko has other creative pursuits. She loves drawing as a way to express herself and unwind. "It's a way for me to let my imagination run wild," she says. She also enjoys playing netball to stay active, and as a first-year fashion student, she is passionate about learning and experimenting with different styles. "I'm looking forward to merging both my modelling and design skills to make a real impact in the fashion world."

Tinyiko's journey is a reflection of determination, self-acceptance, and the power of embracing one's uniqueness. Through her work in front of the camera and her studies, she is shaping her path in the fashion world—one that celebrates creativity, confidence, and individuality.

# Founder of Mr & Miss Soweto Beauties

*Innocentia Senusamadi*



#Inspire

# The Story of Innocentia Senwamadi

## Breaking Barriers in the Pageant World

Innocentia Senwamadi is a name that stands out in the world of modeling and pageantry. At just 23 years old, she has not only won multiple titles but has also created a platform to uplift others. Her journey began in 2021, and in a short time, she has made a lasting impact.

"I was once bullied for being skinny and short," she shares. "I wanted to show the community that no matter how you look, you can achieve anything your mind is set on. It doesn't matter where you come from, but passion and dedication can make you recognized and seen."

Innocentia's journey started with a major win—being crowned Miss Teen Meadowlands Overall Winner. This was just the beginning, as she went on to win Mr. and Miss Emndeni Second Princess and Face of Achievements Gauteng Overall Winner. Each victory built her confidence and solidified her place in the modeling industry.

"Winning Miss Teen Meadowlands made me more confident and comfortable in my own skin," she says. "I became an example to other girls that it doesn't matter how you look; you can always make it. That motivated me to push myself further."

But for Innocentia, modeling has always been about more than just winning crowns. Her motivation has been to inspire others. "I always made sure that when I entered competitions, I left a great mark. It was never about winning but about making a difference, even if just for three minutes. I knew I wasn't doing it only for myself, but to encourage others to step out of their comfort zones."

With this mindset, she decided to create her own pageant, Mr. and Miss Soweto Beauties. "I wanted to give young boys and girls a platform to learn, grow, and express themselves through what they love. It's about being courageous, facing fears, and becoming the change people want to see. It's not always about winning but doing something positive that could change someone's life."

She emphasizes that self-confidence, public speaking, and emotional intelligence are key to success in both modeling and life. "Self-confidence enables people to take risks and pursue their dreams. Public speaking helps them express themselves, share ideas, and build a sense of community. Emotional intelligence allows them to understand their emotions, set healthy boundaries, and build stronger relationships."

Starting a pageant at a young age came with its challenges. "People doubted that I could do it because of my age," she admits. "But knowing what I wanted and having a great team helped me overcome those challenges."

Balancing the competitive nature of the modeling industry while fostering a supportive environment is something Innocentia prioritizes. "I focus on personal growth and encourage others to do the same.

Instead of comparing themselves to others, I urge them to track their progress. I create opportunities for models to connect, share experiences, and support each other. Challenges and setbacks are not failures but opportunities to grow." One of her most rewarding experiences has been mentoring young contestants. "Being recognized as someone who brings positive change in others' lives is one of the most fulfilling moments. Seeing them grow, gain confidence, and thrive means everything to me." Looking ahead, she envisions the pageant industry becoming more inclusive. "The pageant world must continue to promote diversity, inclusivity, and body positivity. It should celebrate individuality and help develop skills that make a real impact. It's never about fame, but about making sure you help others feel better about themselves."

For anyone looking to succeed in modeling or any competitive field, she believes self-confidence, public speaking, and emotional intelligence are essential. "These are qualities no one can ever take away from you. With them, you can achieve great things."

Innocentia stays true to her values by regularly reflecting on her goals and surrounding herself with trusted individuals. "I set boundaries to protect my time, energy, and emotional well-being. I commit to learning and improving my skills while supporting others who share my vision."

Her dream is to create a modeling industry where both men and women thrive equally. "Providing equal opportunities for both males and females is essential to building a fair and healthy industry."

One of the most memorable moments from Mr. and Miss Soweto Beauties was seeing contestants gain confidence. "Watching them finally speak up, fight for what they want, and dream big was incredible. They learned to empathize with others and build meaningful relationships."

Her advice to young aspiring models is clear: "Develop a growth mindset. Focus on learning and improving with each experience. Be patient with yourself and celebrate your achievements. Challenge yourself, take risks, and never stop believing in your potential."

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# Nicolette Brits

#Fashion

# Interview with Nicolette Brits

## New Romantics Ambassador 2025 Finalist

Nicolette Brits, a 47-year-old fitness trainer from Benoni, has earned a spot as a finalist for the New Romantics Couture Brand Ambassador search. Married to Pieter Brits, she brings a unique blend of personal style, passion, and experience to the competition. Nicolette shares her journey and aspirations as she looks forward to potentially representing one of South Africa's most exciting fashion brands.

*"The exceptional talent among the entrants and finalists for the New Romantics Couture Brand Ambassador search is truly inspiring," Nicolette says. "I have no doubt that the judges will be impressed by the outstanding potential on display."*

Her journey into the competition was inspired by Nadene Marx, the owner of New Romantics. "Nadene sparked my enthusiasm to participate in this ambassador search. Her passion and creativity are truly inspiring," Nicolette explains. "I believe our collaboration will foster mutual growth and innovation, and I'm thrilled to work with her. On our first content day, I sought her expertise in selecting the perfect dresses, and she intuitively knew what I needed."

When it comes to New Romantics, Nicolette describes the brand as embodying the transformative power of fashion and self-expression. "Nadene has been destined for greatness in design since birth, blessed with a natural talent and innovative spirit. I'm excited to wear her stunning creations, custom-made for me as an ambassador," she says.

Nicolette believes that the qualities she brings to the table, such as her loyalty and passion for the brand, make her a strong candidate for the title of Brand Ambassador. "I am confident that I can showcase the brand's values and mission in various settings, both online and offline, with authenticity and enthusiasm," she says.

"I look forward to connecting with both long-standing and new customers, listening to their feedback, and incorporating their recommendations to drive positive growth." For Nicolette, fashion has always been a way to express her unique personality and sense of individuality. "Fashion serves as a powerful means of self-expression, enabling individuals to showcase their unique personalities, tastes, and individuality," she explains. "I'm all about effortless elegance, embracing the idea that simplicity can be incredibly powerful. Comfort and confidence allow me to celebrate my unique beauty and own my personal style."

Reflecting on her achievements, Nicolette recalls her transformation from a shy farm girl to a confident woman. She was twice chosen as a finalist for Ms. Merensky, earning the distinction of 2nd princess on the second occasion. "Last year, I took a bold leap out of my comfort zone and was honored to be selected as a Mrs. South Africa Semi-Finalist," she shares. "It unlocked opportunities for growth through photoshoots, modeling lessons with Davina at Ace Models East Rand, and embracing the full experience of being a **semi-finalist."**

If she is selected as the Brand Ambassador, Nicolette plans to promote New Romantics in innovative ways. "During my Mrs. SA journey, I worked with Madeleine from PR Worx, gaining insights that empowered me to represent the brand effectively. I'm excited to use media relations, social marketing, press advertising, and other strategies to promote the New Romantics brand," she says.

Nicolette's fashion inspirations come from brands like Nicci Boutique and Forever New, which she admires for their color palettes, textures, and luxury women's fashion. "Wearing their quality clothes elevates my confidence and makes me feel poised and refined," she explains.

Over the years, Nicolette has faced several challenges, including dealing with the photographer's unavailability on content day and competing against contestants with more social media followers. "I focused on showcasing my unique strengths and celebrated my individuality," she says.

"I believe that being true to myself is the key to overcoming any challenge." As a Brand Ambassador, Nicolette would embody the essence of New Romantics, which she believes is all about embracing fashion with passion and love. "Being true to yourself while presenting your best self is essential, especially for a couture fashion label," she says. For Nicolette, fashion is not just about clothes—it's about confidence and empowerment. "When I wear an outfit that makes me feel empowered, it has a profound impact on how I engage with others and carry myself with poise and conviction," she says.

Looking ahead, Nicolette has big dreams in the fashion industry. "I'm passionate about building my own brand or leading a renowned fashion house as a creative director. I also want to guide the next generation of designers because beautiful clothes have the power to inspire and empower," she shares.

Being a finalist for New Romantics has given Nicolette a fresh perspective on fashion and branding. "It fosters a culture of satisfaction, trust, and loyalty, unlocking a brighter future for all," she says.

Finally, Nicolette has a message for aspiring models and brand ambassadors. "Wherever you go, your attitude has the power to transform your experiences. By engaging with others and fostering meaningful connections, you can unlock a sense of vitality and empowerment," she encourages.

Facebook: Nicolette Brits Mrs SA Scout & Alumni 2025
Instagram: @nicollettebrits
TikTok: @nicolettebritsmrs
www.newromantics.co.za

# Sasha-Lee Oliver

#Model

# Interview with Sasha-Lee Oliver

## More Than Just a Pretty Face

Photographer: Faiz Mills Photography
Makeup Artist: SO Make Up

Sasha-Lee Oliver's journey into modeling came a little later than expected, but once she stepped in front of the camera, she never looked back. "A well-known designer, Denzil Pillay, based in Kimberley, asked me to model his dresses for him," she recalls. "From then, I was hooked. I absolutely loved the flashes from the photographer's camera and how a lens can capture so much beauty and emotion."

*Although she had always been drawn to modeling and loved being photographed, Sasha-Lee initially focused on her netball talent during her school years. It wasn't until Grade 11 that she fully committed to her passion. She quickly gained recognition and became a brand ambassador for photographer Faiz Mills.*

Photogenic modeling, for Sasha-Lee, is more than just taking pictures. "Being able to walk the runway is amazing, but photogenic modeling is different. The lens captures every detail and beauty of a model up close and personal. It allows you to create unique poses in a slower-paced environment."

Preparing for a photoshoot requires precision and self-care. "I make sure I feel good about myself first," she explains. "I prepare every detail perfectly—starting with skincare, hair care, and then perfecting my makeup. A little secret of mine? I do a few body exercises before the shoot. It helps get my body looking good and boosts my confidence."

Confidence is at the heart of Sasha-Lee's success. She thrives under pressure and turns it into motivation. "I remind myself that there is no room for failure. Go big or go home." Her favorite part of modeling is the way her body naturally moves into different poses, capturing confidence through the lens.

*For aspiring photogenic models, Sasha-Lee offers simple yet powerful advice. "Be yourself. Be very confident but stay humble at the same time. There is only one of YOU, and no one can take away your spotlight. This is your time to shine."*

Among her most memorable experiences in front of the camera, one particular shoot stands out. "My pool photoshoot," she says with a laugh. "It's not as easy as it looks! I had to hold a pose and keep my face relaxed while the water knocked me from side to side because of the gusty cold winds."

In an industry filled with competition and high expectations, Sasha-Lee embraces feedback and criticism. "I take any criticism and turn it into motivation. I want to prove that I am great at what I do and that I am bigger than any criticism thrown my way."

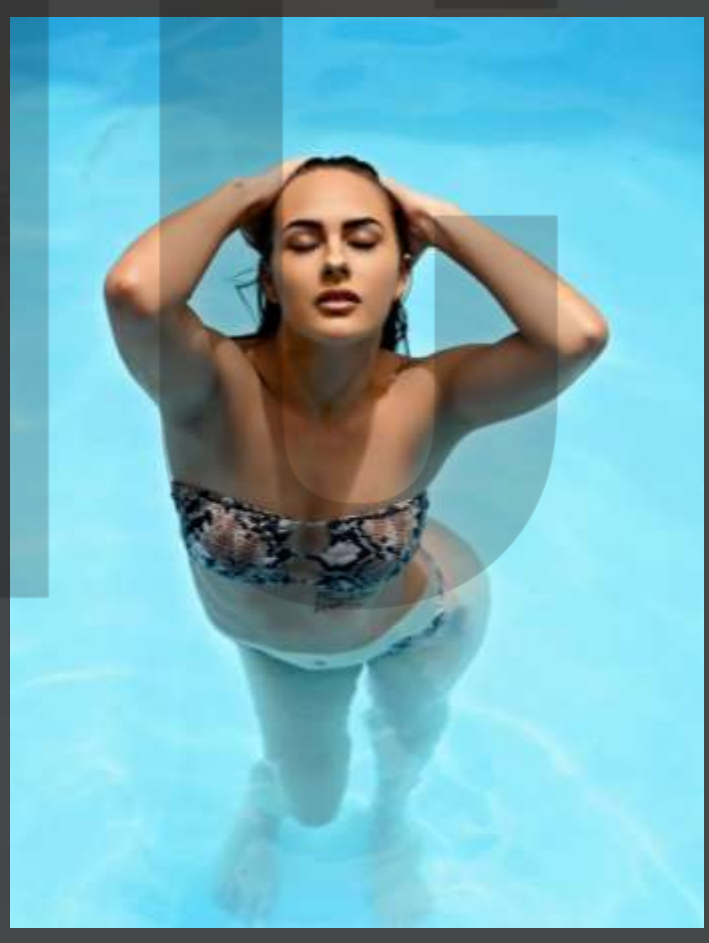
Confidence, she believes, is a key quality for success. "I am confident enough to know that I am the best but humble enough to know that I can be replaced." She also stresses the importance of looking out for oneself in the industry. "Not everyone is your friend. You have to be aware of who truly supports you."

Her inspirations in the modeling world include Shalom Harlow, Naomi Campbell, and Bella Hadid. "When they walk the runway, they do it with so much sass and confidence. It should inspire any model. And Gigi Hadid—when she poses for billboards and advertisements, she does it with such elegance and confidence that it makes you want to buy the product she's promoting." Maintaining physical and mental readiness is crucial for Sasha-Lee. "I've always been athletic. Any form of exercise helps clear my mind and thoughts, and as a bonus, it keeps my body in shape."

*Her fashion sense is innovative and ever-evolving. "I don't follow a specific style. I like to play around with different fashion trends. With the right confidence, you can pull anything off."*

Looking ahead, Sasha-Lee envisions a bright future. "I see myself soaring from height to height—on billboards, runways, high fashion campaigns, fashion shows, and promoting top brands." Social media plays a vital role in this vision. "It's important because word spreads fast on those platforms. Social media can be the start of a young model's career, as well as photographers and designers."

When asked about dream collaborations, Sasha-Lee's list is extensive. "Calvin Klein, YSL, Nike, Adidas—any sporting brands, including swimwear, makeup brands, Sissy Boy, Guess… and the list goes on." With her drive, confidence, and passion for photogenic modeling, Sasha-Lee Oliver is a name to watch. She's not just stepping in front of the camera—she's owning every frame.



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# Stellie Taute

**PPMC MAGAZINE ISSUE 142**

*Mrs. SA 2025 Semi-finalist*

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Instagram: @Stellietaute
TikTok: @stellie_taute
Photo credit: Elani Pretorius
Ace Models George & Mosselbay

#Pageant

# Interview with Stellie Taute

## Mrs. South Africa 2025 Semi-finalist

For years, Stellie Taute worked behind the scenes, designing breathtaking gowns for the Mrs. South Africa finalists. She never imagined stepping onto that stage herself. But this year, everything changed.

"My husband convinced me to take part. He just said, 'Stellie, I think you should enter. I know you can do this.' He knows me better than anyone—my strengths, my personality, and my excuses," she says with a laugh. "To me, this is God's way of pushing me out of my comfort zone. It's an opportunity to inspire women on a whole new level."

*Balancing marriage, work, and personal ambitions isn't easy, but Stellie has found a way to manage it all. "I've learned to turn my glass balls into rubber balls. If I drop one, it bounces back instead of shattering into a million pieces. It's teaching me to handle stress and find balance in every area of my life. Women are truly unstoppable!"*

Becoming a Mrs. South Africa semi-finalist has opened Stellie's eyes to the true power of pageantry. "I had so many misconceptions about pageants, but being on this side of it has completely changed my perspective. From the first workshop, I knew I would walk away from this experience as a different woman. It's been a journey of self-discovery, growth, and pushing boundaries I never thought I would."

*Women's empowerment is at the heart of Stellie's journey. "The most important thing is knowing your worth. If you know your worth and refuse to let anyone, make you feel less, you've already empowered yourself. And when you do that, you can help others do the same. Empowerment is contagious; when one woman rises, she lifts others with her."*

This competition has been a personal transformation for Stellie. "I've always had a fear of public speaking. I'm an Afrikaans boeremeisie at heart, so speaking English in front of an audience terrified me. But I survived my first radio interview in English! I realized that even if I speak 'boere English,' my message will still come across. I've learned that fear only holds power over us if we allow it."

Mrs. South Africa is redefining beauty and success for married women. "They empower women of all ages, shapes, and backgrounds. They teach us that we are worthy, no matter what society says. This platform builds women up and gives us the tools to step into our power. It's not just about outer beauty—it's about confidence, self-love, and the strength to inspire others."

Beyond the competition, Stellie is passionate about helping women become self-sufficient. "I want to teach women how to provide for themselves. I run a clothing factory where I already empower the women working with me, giving them the opportunity to start their own businesses under my roof.

Seeing their confidence grow as they learn to create and plan for their futures is incredible. I would love to expand this project and teach young women skills like needlework and design. By equipping them with practical skills, we are giving them independence and self-reliance." Preparing for the competition has been both a mental and physical journey. "My faith and my family's support keep me going. I have an amazing group of women who mentor and uplift me. And physically, I train five times a week—boxing is my go-to! It keeps my body and mind strong. Physical fitness and mental clarity go hand in hand."

Her biggest challenge? "Public speaking! But I'm facing my fears. Each time I step up, I grow more confident. I've learned that mistakes and imperfections don't define us—our perseverance does." Stellie hopes to use her platform to inspire other women.

"I want to be an example of what happens when you face your fears. In the fashion industry, we compare ourselves to unrealistic standards. I want to show women that they are enough. If I can do it, so can they. The moment you stop doubting yourself, you step into a version of yourself you never thought possible."

Her advice to women who feel uncertain about chasing their dreams? "Start with one thing that scares you and just do it. Pick one fear and face it head-on. Afterwards, you'll look back and realize it wasn't that bad. Believe in yourself and never give up. It's never too late. Age, circumstances, and setbacks do not define your potential."

Stellie credits many women for inspiring her journey. "I can't name just one. From my fellow contestants to the mentors and sponsors, they all play a role in reminding me that I can do this. Mrs. SA is a sisterhood. We support, uplift, and push each other to be the best versions of ourselves."

Looking ahead, Stellie hopes to leave a legacy of courage and faith. "I want to be remembered as the woman who faced her fears. The one who listened when God said, 'I can't use you backstage anymore. I need you on stage.' If I can inspire just one woman to believe in herself, then this journey has been worth it."

"Ultimately, I want my journey to remind others that empowerment is contagious—when one woman rises, she lifts others with her. Every challenge is an opportunity, and every fear we conquer makes room for someone else to step into their power."

# Mrs. Bold 2025 Semi-finalist

*Thembi Nkosi*

It's a step closer
to becoming the
woman of liberty
I aspire to be,
reaching the goals.

#Pageant

# Interview with Thembi Ndlovu

## Mrs. Bold 2025 Semi-finalist

Thembi Ndlovu, a mother of four, a wife, consultant, influencer, and now semi-finalist in the Mrs. Bold 2025 competition, is on a mission to rediscover herself and empower others along the way. After years of prioritizing her family and putting her dreams on hold, she found her way back to herself through the pageant, seeking to revive her own passions and use her platform to uplift young girls.

In an interview, Thembi shared her personal journey and what motivated her to enter the competition: "The truth is, after I got married, I forgot who I am, what I wanted, where I saw myself. I got lost in raising my children, living for my husband, and watching him follow his dreams. But I deserted who Thembi is. It was a sacrifice I made, and I would do it again because I love my family so much. When I saw Mrs. Bold, I saw a second chance to revive me, to rediscover who I am, and in the process, empower a girl child."

*Being named a semi-finalist means a great deal to Thembi. "It's a step closer to becoming the woman of liberty I aspire to be, reaching the goals I've set for myself," she says, with a sense of determination in her voice.*

Balancing her multiple roles isn't always easy, but Thembi has learned to manage them with grace. "I think I've mastered giving myself grace. I ask for help, especially with my children, and I always focus on what matters most. I've accepted that I can't do it all at once." Thembi's advocacy for young girls stems from her own experiences growing up. "Looking at girls growing up, opting for prostitution, drugs, and alcohol abuse for comfort – this has impacted my life and created a lot of pain in my heart," she explains. "It sparked something inside of me, and I saw it as a chance to make a difference and bring positivity to my fellow sisters."

*One of the initiatives close to her heart is the Gee Girls Community, a platform she founded to provide personal growth and life advice for girls. "It's a space where we talk about the issues girls face and come up with solutions. My dream is to provide mentorship and spiritual guidance. This platform will allow me to reach and support a large number of girls."*

Thembi's passion for empowering the girl child comes from deep personal experience. "My father died when I was five, and I was raised by my mom, a strong, compassionate woman who lost a case against my father's family and was chased out of the home she built. Because I am a girl child, I couldn't inherit the house," she reflects. "Seeing what my mother went through fuels my commitment to making a change and empowering girls."

Despite the challenges women face in her industry, including lack of networking opportunities and limited access to education, Thembi remains determined. "I try to involve myself in events and activities with the hope that it will open doors for me," she says. "I am self-driven, and I keep pushing forward."

Thembi's advocacy extends beyond her community work to her creative endeavors. "We live in a society where skill development is critical. Empowering young girls through crochet encourages creativity, independence, and community development. Teaching women and girls these skills gives them a way to earn money and become financially independent," she says, showing how her creative work aligns with her mission. Being an influencer has allowed Thembi to spark creativity and build her potential. "I love that it sparks creativity and innovation within me. It helps me realize my potential and creates something from nothing. It's fulfilling, and of course, there are the benefits and goodies that come with it."

If she wins the Mrs. Bold 2025 title, Thembi has plans to focus on teaching girls how to crochet. "One of the benefits of crocheting is its ability to promote relaxation and mindfulness, which is also a mental health benefit," she shares. "I already have the Gee Talk movement on Instagram that empowers the girl child through conversation, but I want to have more in-person events where the girls can have personal mentors."

Thembi believes a Mrs. Bold titleholder should embody strength, compassion, and determination. "She should be bold yet soft, confident, courageous, and always determined to fulfill the goals she sets for herself."

When asked about her advice for young women, Thembi encourages them to step out of their comfort zones. "You will never be ready to do something. You just need to start, do it, and you will see growth. Confidence and personal development are on the other side of fear."

Thembi draws inspiration from the strong women around her. "I am surrounded by powerful women who love God. They carry me with their prayers and love me unconditionally. They are my inspiration," she says, expressing gratitude for their support.

*Ultimately, Thembi's legacy is one of kindness, compassion, and making a difference in the lives of young girls. "I want to inspire my children to be kind and compassionate, and for my community to remember me for the impact I had on the girl child and my volunteer work," she concludes, her voice filled with purpose.*

# Mbabi Mudau

**PPMC MAGAZINE ISSUE 142**

*Founder of Ambara Africa*

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#Fashion

# Interview with Mbabi Mudau

## Founder of Ambara Africa

A story by:
Etaiya Briscoe

Ambara is a high-end stylist brand that creates luxurious designs for individuals who value rarity, quality, and sophistication. It is a brand that stands out, not for following fleeting fashion trends, but for crafting timeless style. The founder of Ambara Africa, Mbabi Mudau, has always had an artistic side, which led to a journey in interactive creative design.

*This background certified him as a Digital Programming Engineer, but his passion for fashion took center stage. "The leap from digital creation to fashion design was a rapid, art and passion-filled move," he says.*

Minimalism, modernism, creativity, and quality form the foundation of Ambara's designs. Mudau understands that people find it difficult to accept change. "Instead of giving them something entirely new, I offer them the newly improved old," he explains. His creative process blends past and present to create a nostalgic yet fresh look. "I don't believe in reinventing the wheel, but improving it."

Running a fashion business requires more than creativity. Practicality plays a key role in making a brand successful. "Balancing creativity with practicality is crucial. Setting clear goals and priorities ensures that creative decisions align with the brand's core objectives," says Mudau. For Ambara, creativity is nurtured to support the practical aspects of running a business.

Ambara may be young, but it is already making its mark. "The past six months have been nothing but encouraging," says Mudau. "From knocking and opening doors at an international betting company to being nominated to showcase at one of the biggest fashion shows in South Africa, I must admit the challenge of introducing the brand to its market was rather more parachuting than defeating."

*One of his most memorable moments was when he showcased his first sample suit. "Oh my word, the day I showcased one of the first sample suits I ever designed and won a client's confidence in the brand without the client knowing that, that was my first and only suit in my collection," he recalls with excitement.*

Ambara is not a mass-market brand. "It is not a secret that Ambara's market niche is for a select few who value rarity and exclusivity," says Mudau. This exclusivity forms the foundation of the brand's community. He believes that success comes from creating a unique space in the fashion world.

"It is never too late to start, establish your market, and diversify it by adding creativity. Creating a no-competition environment will automatically classify you as a trendsetter."

Fashion is constantly evolving, but Ambara focuses on revolutionizing style rather than following trends. "Fashion is seasonal; Ambara is about style, elegantly dressing its community today and making sure they look vintage tomorrow without losing a sense of class," he says. To maintain this, the brand prioritizes high-quality, rare fabrics. "Accountability is at the forefront of our ethical morals and practices."

Mudau follows the advice of a mentor who once told him, "A wise man taught me to work in silence and make noise on completion." Looking ahead, he sees the fashion industry embracing technology. "Wouldn't it be unfair for me as a certified Programmer not to bring in the thought of AI?" he says.

He believes that brands will become more technologically advanced, tailoring clothes to individual preferences. "The industry will shift towards circular business models, where clothing is designed to be recycled, reused, and biodegradable. AI, digital influencers, and avatars will play a large role in shaping fashion trends and promoting brands."

*Ambara Africa is not just a brand; it is a vision of elegance, exclusivity, and innovation. With a commitment to timeless style and a clear artistic direction, it is setting the standard for what luxury fashion should be.*

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#Pageant

# Introducing Gerdalize Bukes

## Mrs. South Africa 2025 Semi-finalist

Photo credit: Stephanie Grace Photography
MUA: Sonika Verwy SovannBeauty@Bspoilt
Hair: Jolene Elbert The Hair Space
Venue: Duckpoint Venue Vaal

Gerdalize Bukes, a semi-finalist for Mrs. South Africa 2025, is on a mission to inspire, mentor, and support women across the country. For her, entering the competition is not just about personal achievement but about using the platform to uplift others. "I want to encourage women and young people to believe in their worth and potential," she says. "Mrs. South Africa gives me an opportunity to advocate for positive change, raise awareness, and drive initiatives that empower communities."

*Her definition of beauty goes beyond the surface. "Beauty comes from within and then radiates outward. It is about sincerity, kindness, and carrying oneself with grace, humility, and elegance," she explains. "The word that sums it up for me is 'regal' – something suitable for a queen, impressive and beautiful."*

Gerdalize is passionate about mental health and well-being, a cause close to her heart. "I have faced life's challenges with unwavering determination, and I want to encourage women to take the step towards healing, self-care, and finding themselves again." Her involvement with Ironman4thekidz, a charity that raises funds through triathlons to support children from difficult backgrounds, reflects her deep commitment to making a difference. "If I could, I would help everyone," she says. "Children hold a special place in my heart. If you wish to donate, please visit ironman4thekidz."

The journey of Mrs. South Africa has been filled with meaningful connections. "The women I have met on this journey have been the most rewarding part. I love connecting with people from all walks of life and embracing diversity. It leads to discussions that inspire growth and understanding."

Balancing personal, professional, and pageant responsibilities is not easy, but her endurance training has taught her discipline. "I have trained for endurance races like Ironman 70.3 and Transbaviaans. These challenges pushed me beyond my limits and taught me that true strength comes from perseverance and a steadfast mindset. Planning my days, getting up early, and taking time to rest when needed is how I stay balanced."

Gerdalize believes her ability to connect with people and inspire women to embrace their strength sets her apart from the other semi-finalists. "I want women to prioritize their well-being and believe in their ability to transform their lives." Her own life has had its share of challenges, and she has overcome them with courage. "I had to recognize that I needed help. Facing trauma I had ignored was the best decision I made."

Handling criticism is part of being in a high-pressure competition. "Not everyone will be on my team," she says. "There's a phrase I love: 'What other people say about you has nothing to do with you.' It reminds me that external opinions don't define my worth."

If she wins the title of Mrs. South Africa, Gerdalize plans to advocate for mental health awareness. "I want to encourage personal growth and uplift women from all backgrounds, helping them unlock their full potential." She is particularly passionate about tackling gender-based violence. "Too many girls and women die at the hands of men they love. It should stop. I will use my platform to create awareness in my community and schools to tell women that it's not okay and they must seek help."

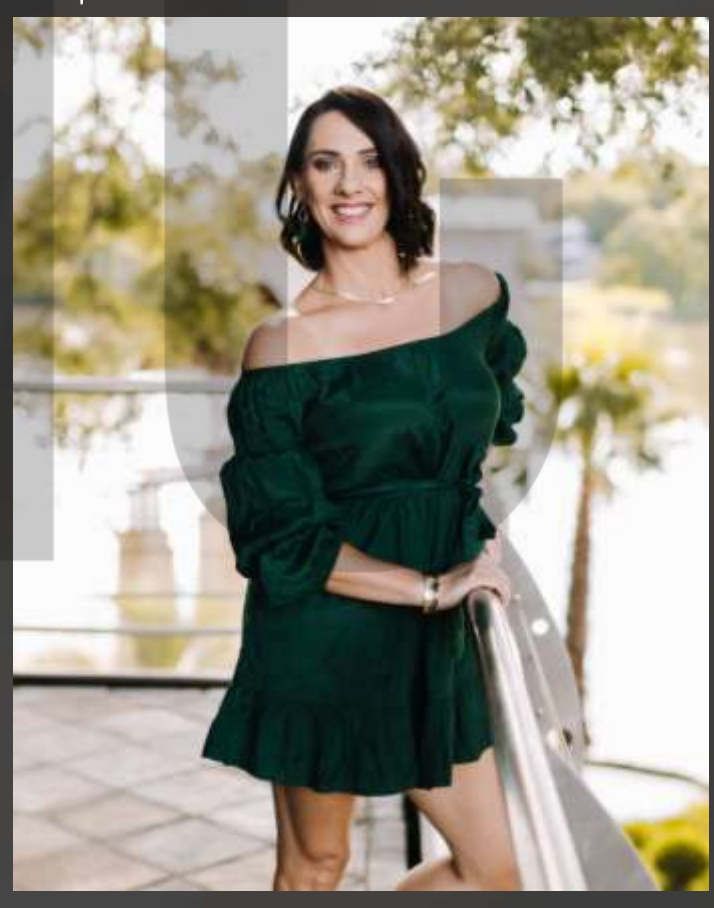
Being a role model means leading by example. "It's about inspiring others through my actions, treating everyone with respect and love, and mentoring those who look up to me." Her biggest support system in this journey has been her 17-year-old son, Daniel.

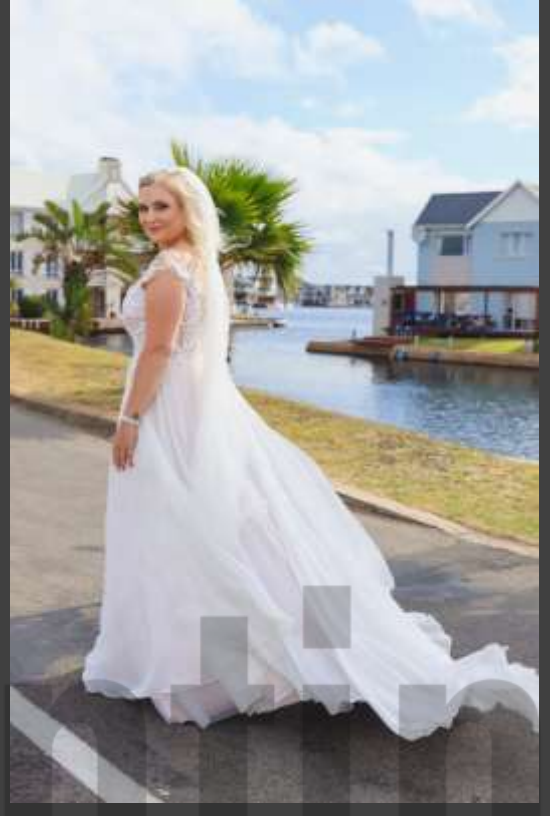
"He is the head photographer at his school, Helpmekaar Kollege. He takes most of my photos and helps me a lot with my Instagram. We laugh at all the bloopers – it's so much fun sharing this experience with him!" She encourages others to follow his work on Instagram: @Daniel_fotografie.

Gerdalize uses social media to inspire and engage others. "On April 1st, my message to the ladies was: 'Stepping into this new month with a heart full of gratitude and a spirit ready to embrace every blessing that comes from the Lord. April is a reminder that beauty exists in both our flaws and strengths – a season to grow, shine, and walk forward.'"

For women considering entering Mrs. South Africa in the future, she has simple advice: "Be prepared. It's hard work but a lot of fun! The people and friends you make on this journey are incredible, and you never know what opportunities might come your way!"

*Gerdalize Bukes is not just a beauty queen. She is a woman on a mission, using her voice to uplift others and make a lasting impact.*





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# Erianca Pelser

**PPMC MAGAZINE ISSUE 142**

*Pretty Little Things Dress Boutique*

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#Fashion

# Interview with Erianca Pelser

## Pretty Little Things Dress Boutique

A story by:
Etaiya Briscoe

Erianca Pelser never imagined she would one day own a dress boutique. "I never thought I would actually end up in the fashion industry as it was never really my passion, but as the years passed, I realized I could not do what I really wanted to do, so I opened my mind to new possibilities," she reflects. Her journey, one filled with unexpected turns, has led her to become the owner of Pretty Little Things Dress Boutique, a business that has quickly gained recognition in the Eastern Cape.

In 2020, after the birth of her son, Erianca left her permanent job to be a stay-at-home mom, cherishing every moment with him. During this time, she began selling handmade crafts and reselling various items at local markets to generate extra income.

"After about 10 months, I realized I couldn't keep this up and had to go back into working full time again," she says. She found a position as a finance and admin manager at a construction company, a job she still holds today, but her desire for something more never faded.

In 2023, a new opportunity presented itself—an offer to purchase a dress hiring business. "I didn't know much about fashion or the industry, but I grabbed the opportunity and bought the company with around 80 wedding and formal dresses," she shares. Though entering unfamiliar territory, Erianca dove in, starting to advertise the dresses on Facebook Marketplace. The first two months were quiet, but soon enough, her business began to grow.

She expanded her offerings by collaborating with a seamstress to create custom-made dresses for clients. "I also started taking consignment dresses from ladies who wanted to get rid of their dresses," she explains. This decision paid off as the boutique's collection swelled from 80 dresses to over 400 within a year. By the end of 2024, Pretty Little Things Dress Boutique had hosted 43 weddings and 20 formal events, earning the title of one of the Eastern Cape's top service providers.

The boutique's success has been nothing short of a blessing, especially considering that Erianca still works full time. "It can be challenging at times balancing creativity with practicality," she admits. "But I make it a point to prioritize my clients' needs while also keeping creativity at the forefront. Each dress should be as unique as possible."

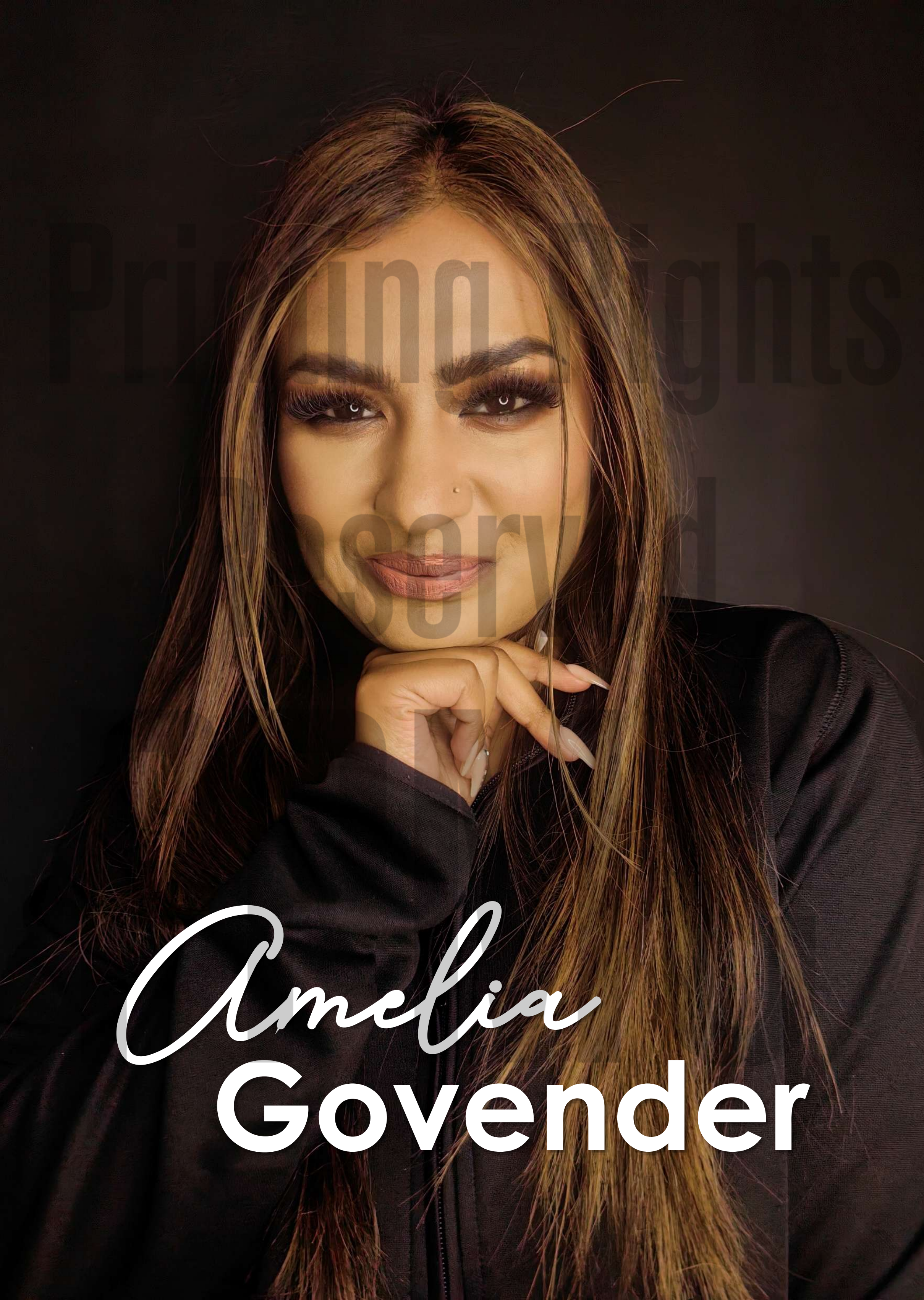
Pretty Little Things Dress Boutique, as Erianca explains, was created with the vision of making designer fashion accessible to everyone. "We recognize that while style is timeless, acquiring every piece can often be impractical," she says. "That's why we offer a wide selection of dresses for hire, allowing clients to experience couture without the commitment of purchase." In addition to dress hire, the boutique offers custom-made options for clients who don't find the perfect piece in the collection.

What makes the boutique truly stand out is its focus on sustainability. "Most of our dresses are second-hand, some worn a number of times, some only once," she notes. "We believe in trying to reuse dresses before making new ones. If a client wants a new design, we'll create it, but we rarely stock more than two of the same dress." Each year, dresses that are no longer in fashion are donated to charity, contributing to a more sustainable industry.

Looking ahead, Erianca sees a major shift in consumer behavior. "The world is changing, and people have become more conscious of conserving the earth," she observes. "I see second-hand clothing and upcycled products becoming a major trend in the future."

The future is already bright for Pretty Little Things. In April, the boutique will collaborate with V Models for a fashion show showcasing their formal wear, and later in the year, they'll be part of a bridal expo hosted by B Unique Weddings and Events. Erianca's close work with local agencies and event planners has helped solidify her place in the local fashion scene.

Through it all, Erianca's message to others is simple: "Never give up, keep smiling, dream big and chase those dreams. Work hard and keep your head up high." Her business may have started as an unexpected venture, but today, it stands as proof that hard work, adaptability, and a passion for fashion can create something truly special.


Amelia
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#Pageant

# Interview with Amelia Govender

## Mrs. South Africa 2025 Semi-finalist

For Amelia Govender, joining the Mrs. South Africa 2025 competition is more than just pageantry—it's a personal commitment. “For me, entering Mrs. South Africa 2025 is really about finding myself again,” she says. “Life as a mom, wife, and working professional can pull your focus outward, and I realized I needed to start choosing me again.”

A mother of three and a corporate leader, Amelia is on a path to rediscover who she is beyond her responsibilities. “This journey is about proving to myself that I can still chase dreams, take on new challenges, and grow, without letting go of the roles I hold dear,” she explains. It's also a way to show her 12-year-old daughter that dreams don’t disappear with age or motherhood. “I want to be a role model and show her that no matter where you are in life, your passions and dreams still matter.”

Amelia is using this opportunity to promote something close to her heart—mental wellness. “It’s not about being selfish, it’s about being whole,” she says. “I want to help normalize saying ‘I’m overwhelmed’ or ‘I need a break’ without shame. Crying doesn’t mean you’re failing—it means you’re human.”

Balancing her demanding career, parenting, and pageant preparations is no easy feat. “There are days I feel overwhelmed and wonder if I’m doing enough,” she shares. “But honestly, it’s by the grace of God that I get through, and I’m incredibly blessed with a support system that helps me make it all work.” Her husband, full-time helper, and mother all play a part in helping raise their three kids—ages one, three, and twelve. “It’s busy and chaotic,” she says, “but their help gives me room to focus on work, on this pageant journey, and on taking care of myself too, like getting to the gym.”

Support extends beyond the home. “At work, my director is super supportive, and that honestly makes a huge difference,” she adds. “Even with all the support, the pressure is still very real. There are deadlines, the kids need attention, and life keeps going. So I rely heavily on planning—being really clear on what’s most important each day, and making sure it gets scheduled.”

Her leadership role in the corporate world has shaped how she sees personal development. “My time as a corporate leader has taught me that personal growth is a never-ending process,” she says. “Adaptability has been key—being able to adjust my approach when things change has made me more capable in both my career and personal life. Humility has also been a big lesson.”

*Amelia is deeply passionate about helping other women. “My heart is really in helping women feel seen, supported, and strong,” she says. “One of the biggest things I want to do is open up conversations about mental health and let women know that prioritizing mental wellness isn't a luxury—it’s essential.”*

*She has witnessed how damaging it can be when women are not supported in the workplace. “I’ve seen how tough it can be when women tear each other down instead of lifting each other up,” she says. “That has to stop. Empowerment is not a competition — it’s collaboration.”*

Her past has also fueled her advocacy for women’s rights. “Post Partum Depression & Gender-based violence (GBV) is a major issue affecting women in South Africa,” she says. “Having personally experienced Post Partum Depression & abuse, I am committed to raising awareness, advocating for stricter laws, and supporting survivors.”

Amelia knows the workplace needs to evolve, especially for working moms. “There was a time when my work didn’t accommodate my family needs,” she shares. “I even faced discrimination when asking for a raise while juggling responsibilities. It made me realize how crucial it is to advocate for change—like flexible work policies and greater understanding of a mother's role.”

Her marriage is another strong pillar of support. “My husband is my rock—he believes in me every day, and that unwavering support gives me the confidence to step outside my comfort zone,” she says. “His love helps me feel beautiful from within and has been a driving force in my pursuit of this incredible opportunity to grow and inspire others.”

To women who are hesitant to chase their goals, Amelia has a message: “Your dreams are valid, and you are capable of achieving them. Don't let societal expectations dim your light. It’s okay to want more and prioritize your own aspirations.”

Her biggest inspiration? “My children inspire me the most. They motivate me to grow and be the best version of myself. I also admire past Mrs. South Africa contestants and women like Nomzamo Mbatha, who uses her platform for social change.”

To stay grounded and push through moments of doubt, Amelia leans into faith and positivity. “I rely on my faith, block out negative voices, and curate my social media to be uplifting. I focus on my strengths and past achievements, and surround myself with positive people who help build my self-belief.”

Whether she takes the crown or not, Amelia plans to continue her work. “I want to continue advocating for women’s mental well-being, raise awareness about Post Partum Depression & GBV, and inspire women to pursue their dreams,” she says. “I aim to create spaces where women can be supported, safe, and empowered.”

She believes society can do more. “Workplace reforms like flexible work arrangements, equal pay, and better parental leave are needed,” she says. “There should also be societal shifts to challenge traditional gender roles, invest in affordable childcare, and support single mothers. Post Partum depression & GBV must be addressed as a top priority.”

And finally, when asked what she’d tell her younger self, her answer is heartfelt. “Trust your parents’ intentions and cherish every moment with them. Their love and guidance are precious, even when you don’t fully understand it. As a mother now, I strive to create that same foundation of trust and love with my own children.”

# Miss Teen Globe International SA 2024

*Zoe Ebrahim*

My dream is to one day walk the Miss South Africa stage and represent our country at Miss Universe.

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#Model

# Interview with Zoe Ebrahim

## Beauty with Purpose

From the moment Zoe Ebrahim entered her first modeling competition in primary school at Ebenezer Academy, Algoa Park, she knew she was meant for the stage. "I would always watch Miss Teen Universe and envision myself being on that stage someday," she recalls. Her parents, however, urged her to focus on school before pursuing modeling full-time. But the dream never faded.

In 2021, while in Grade 11, Zoe entered a local modeling competition where she caught the attention of Aunty Gail, the owner of Sophisticate Models. "I had to focus on my books at the time, but I knew I wanted to be part of the agency," she says. In February 2022, during her matric year, she finally joined. "My parents weren't sure if I'd manage both school and modeling, but I did it," she says proudly.

*At Sophisticate Models, she competed in every competition, learning and growing not just as a model but as a young woman. "Thanks to Aunty Gail and my teachers, I gained so much confidence and improved my technique. I also made new friends who I now consider sisters."*

Since then, Zoe has walked in multiple fashion shows, including the Luce Della Moda Show and the Greenacres Fashion Show for three years. She also starred in a bridal shoot and a Dairy Woodlands TV commercial for First Choice Milk. "All of this wouldn't have been possible without the support of my family, friends, and everyone at the agency."

In 2023, she took a bold step and entered Miss Teen Universe South Africa. "I heard about it from a friend and decided to take a leap of faith," she says. Her parents were unaware at first, and she admits she was nervous. "It was my first national pageant, but I knew with God by my side and everything I had learned, I could do it." She became a semi-finalist, representing the Eastern Cape, and later traveled to Johannesburg for the sashing ceremony. "It was one of the best experiences of my life, meeting new friends and having a platform to give back to the community."

The grand finale took place in March 2024 at the Sun Sibaya Theatre in Durban. The journey was filled with charity work, meetings, and intense preparation. "On the 22nd, we registered, visited a school to donate shoes, and had dinner with the reigning queens and judges," she recalls. The next day was the preliminary round.

"I walked in my national costume, sportswear, and evening wear. During my evening wear, I stumbled, but I kept walking like it never happened." Despite feeling disappointed, her parents and fellow contestants lifted her spirits. "They believed in me, and that meant everything."

After the preliminary round came the interviews. "I was nervous, but my parents told me to just be myself. Once the questions started, I felt the weight lift off my shoulders." On the final day, she walked on stage one last time. "Backstage, we held hands, encouraging each other. Then they started announcing the Top 10. When I heard my name, I couldn't believe it!"

And then came the life-changing moment. "I had my eyes closed, praying. When I heard my name—'Our Miss Teen Globe South Africa is... Zoe Ebrahim'—I was in shock. As the reigning queen crowned me, I couldn't stop smiling. My dreams had come true!" Although she qualified to represent South Africa internationally in Paraguay, financial constraints prevented her from going.

*Still, she remained committed to giving back. "I visited Ebenezer Academy, where it all started, and spoke to the students about chasing their dreams. I also worked with Livingstone Hospital, bringing socks, coloring books, and snacks to the children in the pediatric ward. It was heartwarming to receive messages from young girls saying I had inspired them."*

Her reign ended in March 2025, but this is only the beginning. "I'm about to turn 21, and my focus is on studying and working to give back to my parents. I'm completing my final course at Sophisticate Models and now working as an agency model. But I still want to compete in pageants and take my modeling career further. My dream is to one day walk the Miss South Africa stage and represent our country at Miss Universe."

*Modeling and pageantry have taught her valuable lessons. "It's not easy. It's mentally, physically, and emotionally demanding. I had to learn time management, punctuality, and how to handle criticism. In this industry, every client looks for something different, and rejection is just redirection. Every setback has only motivated me to work harder."*

Zoe Ebrahim is determined to keep chasing her dreams. "To all the young boys and girls out there—believe in yourself. Your best is always enough. Step out of your comfort zone, because doors open for those who dare to knock."

Instagram : zoe.ebrahim
Facebook : Zoe Ebrahim

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# Unathi

## South African Defender's Journey Across Borders and Back Again

Instagram: @u_thango12
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#Sport

# Unathi Sibonakaliso Sekuhle Thango

## Chasing Dreams on the Soccer Field

Unathi Sibonakaliso Sekuhle Thango's journey in soccer has taken him from the fields of Johannesburg to the competitive leagues in the United States. His love for the game started at the age of seven when he played for Robertsham Callies. "That is where I first fell in love with the sport and was taught the fundamentals," he says. By 13, he moved to Randburg FC to be closer to his boarding school, Parktown Boys High. After three years there, he found himself clubless for two years in Richards Bay before enrolling at Sharks Academy. "That's when I really felt a huge growth in my game and skill set."

In 2018, Unathi became club captain and was offered an opportunity to play in America. He played for a Junior College in Illinois, later joining a Division 2 NCAA school in Missouri and then a competitive NAIA school in Arizona. He also played professional indoor soccer for two years, winning the Western Conference with Springfield Demize. "Last year, I played for FCAZ and lost in the semifinals of our conference in penalties," he recalls. Unfortunately, his journey hit a bump when he tore his ACL, but he remains determined to make a strong comeback in 2026.

Adjusting to soccer in a different country was not easy. "The biggest challenge is the cultural shift," Unathi explains. "America is still growing in the game, and their college rules don't fit the mould of their professional game. They have unlimited substitutions, so the pace is extremely high for 90 minutes. I remember my first game in junior college, I played for 10 minutes, got subbed out, and was confused. My coach told me I would go back on, and I didn't understand how that was possible. But once you get used to the rules, it becomes easier to use them to your advantage."

Comparing styles of play, Unathi finds the American approach more structured and intense. "In South Africa, we play professional rules even at a young age. The intensity starts high but drops after about 30 minutes, allowing players to pick and choose their moments. Here, it's fast-paced throughout, and only a few players have the freedom to express themselves. Back home, it's all about enjoying the game, and winning is important, but so is having fun." One of his most memorable moments came when he scored the winning goal for John Wood Community College against a nationally ranked team. "I play as a center-back, so I don't score often, but in that game, I was subbed in as a striker. With my third touch, I scored with my weak foot. I've scored more goals since, but that one will always be special."

Staying motivated while being away from home is not easy, but Unathi keeps his focus by remembering how rare this opportunity is. "A lot of people back home don't get this chance. Even in America, many aspiring soccer players don't make it to college. I remind myself to be thankful and think of the sacrifices my family and I have made. With the power of God and my support system, how could I not be motivated?"

Currently recovering from his ACL injury, Unathi's daily routine looks different. "I have rehab every Monday with my physiotherapist, who runs my workout plan. On Wednesdays and Fridays, I apply what I learned. If I were fully fit, I'd have early morning agility and sprint training on Mondays and Wednesdays, followed by team training in the afternoon. We'd do a lot of mini-games, offense vs. defense drills, and focus on tactics for the next season."

When it comes to inspirations, Marcelo was a key influence. "As a left-back, watching him play was amazing. He showed me that even a defensive player could be an attacking threat. When I was converted to center-back, I started watching Sergio Busquets. He's not a CB, but since I still have an attacking mindset, I find myself in midfield a lot. My coach allows me to be part of the attack, but not too much that I'm out of position to defend."

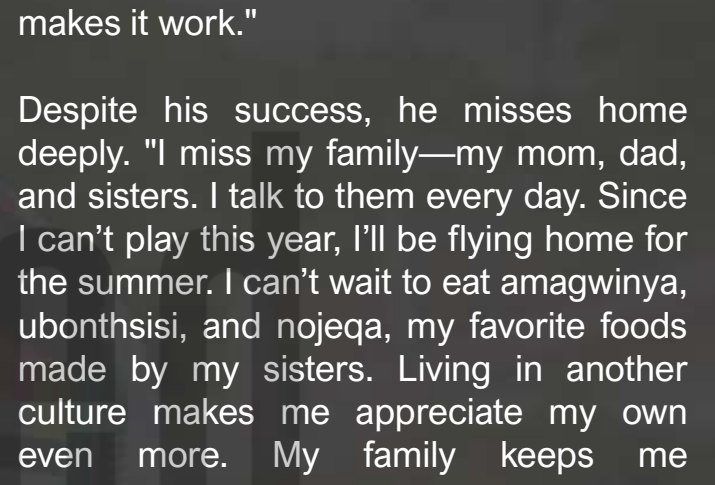
Looking ahead, Unathi acknowledges that his injury and age make it difficult to secure a professional contract in the MLS or PSL. "I still love the game and want to play at the highest level possible. If I can make that leap, great, but if not, I'd love to coach a college team and share my knowledge. I'm also studying to become a sports psychologist, so I see myself working in the sports world, helping athletes reach their goals."

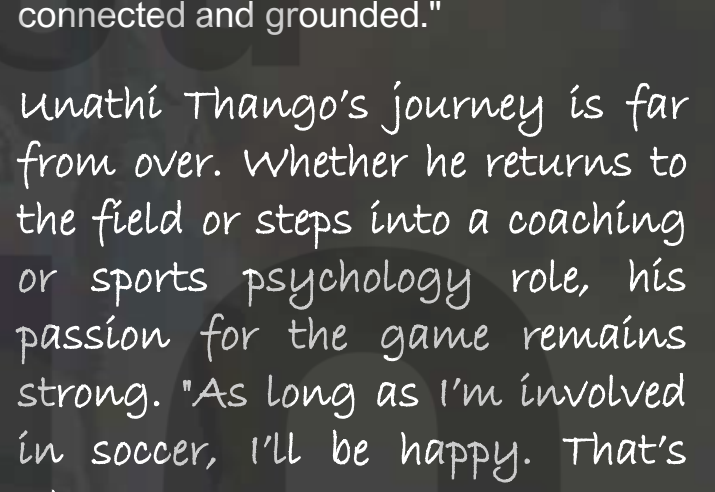
Handling pressure in a foreign country requires a strong mindset. "I remind myself that I've played this sport for a long time. It's the same game. There are 22 players, the ball is still round, and we've trained hard. All I need to do is execute to the best of my ability." His advice to young South African players dreaming of playing abroad is simple. "Give yourself some grace. Athletes put so much pressure on themselves, and it affects their physical and mental health. You can't play injured, so take care of yourself."

Outside of soccer, Unathi enjoys gaming, drawing, and working on his car. "I play Warzone or FIFA with my best friend for a few hours. Drawing helps calm my mind. I once wanted to be an artist, but soccer took priority. I'm also turning my car into a show car, and I love learning about what makes it work."

Despite his success, he misses home deeply. "I miss my family—my mom, dad, and sisters. I talk to them every day. Since I can't play this year, I'll be flying home for the summer. I can't wait to eat amagwinya, ubonthsisi, and nojeqa, my favorite foods made by my sisters. Living in another culture makes me appreciate my own even more. My family keeps me connected and grounded."

*Unathi Thango's journey is far from over. Whether he returns to the field or steps into a coaching or sports psychology role, his passion for the game remains strong. "As long as I'm involved in soccer, I'll be happy. That's what matters most."*





# Clive Hadebe

**PPMC MAGAZINE ISSUE 142**

*Fashion, Purpose, and Passion*

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#Fashion

# Interview with Clive Hadebe

## Pietermaritzburg Fashion Extravaganza

For Clive Hadebe, organizing the Pietermaritzburg Fashion Extravaganza was never just about clothes or runway lights. It was about creating a platform. "I was inspired by a lot of things, such as the lack of opportunities happening for the community in Pietermaritzburg," he said.

"I saw a gap and ran with it." That gap became an opportunity to turn creativity into something meaningful—not only for fashion lovers but for an entire community hungry for growth and inspiration.

Clive's vision stretches beyond city borders. "My vision is to see it grow into a national event," he said. And judging by the energy and response at this year's show, it's a vision that's already starting to take shape. Held at Bassie Head Library in Pietermaritzburg, the event brought together designers, models, makeup artists, and guests from across the country to celebrate style, talent, and community.

The Pietermaritzburg Fashion Extravaganza is closely connected to the mission of Face of SA High Schools, an organization that supports and uplifts disadvantaged youth. "The Pietermaritzburg Fashion Extravaganza's contribution to the long-term goals of Face of SA High Schools is underscored by our dedication to making a tangible difference," Clive explained. "It is a movement that uplifts and empowers."

The planning behind the scenes was intense, but seeing it all come to life made it worthwhile. "The most rewarding part is when everything you have been working on for months and weeks of planning comes together in real life," said Clive. "In the future, I hope to have designers, models, and VIP guests from all over the country and the continent."

Clive explained that the heart of the event was focused on youth development. "Our main goal was to focus on youth development in the communities, regarding sports, art, and recreation, e.g., Modeling, Fashion, Music, Art, etc. Yes, our goal was achieved beyond our expectations." For many young people, it was their first time on a runway or in front of a crowd. For others, it was a chance to gain exposure, meet industry professionals, and showcase their work on a bigger stage.

One of the standout aspects of the event was the talent and creativity of the designers. "Each designer had his or her own unique look. They truly brought their A-game to the runway," Clive said. Some collections had the audience buzzing. "Zero Tolerance, M Shades, Cotton Slave, FS CREATIONS, Khusi Duo Designs, and Drip Zone" were among the names that stood out for their originality and bold designs.

The models, too, made a huge impression. Clive was full of praise for the team from Studio 031 Model Management & Casting. "They were professional, on time, and very dedicated to their craft. It was amazing working with them," he said. Their presence helped bring the designers' visions to life.

Makeup artists also played an important role in adding those final touches that elevated the entire show. "The makeup artist did her magic because every designer had a different look for their collection," Clive said. This attention to detail helped each model represent the designer's concept perfectly.

Behind the curtains, the vibe was a mix of nerves and excitement. "It was crazy but fun and calm at the same time. Everyone was super excited, and it all flew by so quickly," Clive said. From the makeup brushes to the final walk, the backstage area was buzzing with hard work and passion.

The event also gave a strong message about the connection between fashion and community development. "This event was more than just a showcase," Clive explained. "It was a powerful statement dedicated to uplifting disadvantaged communities through various impactful initiatives." It showed that fashion could be more than entertainment—it could be a way to educate, motivate, and unite.

Among the key moments that brought the audience to their feet was the appearance of Elle Glasspoole, Face of SA High School 2024 and the event's guest of honor. "Elle's journey exemplifies the very essence of what we strive for at Face of SA High Schools: empowerment... and transformation," Clive said. Her presence was a powerful reminder of how far hard work and confidence can take a young person.

VIP guests and influencers also helped raise the profile of the event. "The runway wasn't the only star of the day," Clive said. "A host of esteemed VIP guests added extra sparkle to the occasion." Their support brought attention to the cause and gave young talents an audience that matters.

To the many young people watching or taking part, Clive had a message filled with hope. "As our slogan says, 'The youth of today to make an impact tomorrow,' the message is clear: anything is possible if you put your mind to it. And opportunities come to those who chase them."

But it wasn't all smooth sailing. "It was a fundraising event without any sponsors," Clive admitted. "But the team worked non-stop to make it possible. Thanks to Thozama and Ricy." Despite limited resources, the event went ahead successfully, showing what determination and teamwork can do.

Looking ahead, the excitement continues. "They must go to our social media pages on Facebook @FaceofSaHighSchools and on Instagram @Face_of_sa_highschools," said Clive. "Our entries are open for 2025, and they will get all the information via this Google Form link as well."

The Pietermaritzburg Fashion Extravaganza showed that style and substance can go hand in hand. For many, it was a night of fashion. But for Clive Hadebe and the team behind Face of SA High Schools, it was a step toward a bigger, brighter future.

Zion Rose is making a name for himself in the world of art and acting, bringing his creativity to the global stage. From having his artwork recognized by a former U.S. ambassador to creating dioramas that capture important moments in sports and life, Zion is proving that young artists can make an impact.

"Thank you for letting me get interviewed by your magazine, it's a pleasure," Zion says with excitement. "To showcase my artwork to U.S. Ambassador Roger Nyhus is highly astonishing. Ambassador Nyhus is a big lover of art, and he created a night of the Art in Embassies exhibition for local artists here in Barbados.

I did not attend because I am a minor, but my daddy and aunty Sheena Rose, who's a global artist, attended and she was also honored. I saw photos of the night and decided to recreate that eventful night with my art. Presenting it to the ambassador at the Bridgetown U.S. embassy, I felt so honored. The U.S. embassy even had my sister Trinity, Ambassador Nyhus, and myself on their Instagram with art." Zion's artwork has now found a home in the former ambassador's residence in Seattle. "The ambassador said he's putting it in a special place in his residence and it will be honored soon. He will send us the photos. The former ambassador is a big art collector and now I am in his collection. To me, potentially seeing my artwork in Seattle at the former ambassador's home makes me feel so proud being recognized on a global stage. I can't wait to see it!"

Zion's creativity is driven by a passion for storytelling. His diorama of Sir Curtly Ambrose and the West Indies vs. Sri Lanka was inspired by a film audition. "I was auditioned by a film team from Atlanta, and they gave me a bunch of questions to research and ask him when I found out I got the job. So, I decided to take it a step further. While I was watching YouTube videos of his wondrous feats, I was creating a diorama of him against mighty teams and decided upon Sri Lanka. That week was not easy. Every day I would go to school and quietly under a tree rehearse my script at lunchtime, then when I got home, I would turn on his videos, get my glue gun, and work on the diorama. I even made his character taller than the others, gave him his trademark gold chain, and made his hands bigger. Sir Curtly was really impressed. I wanted to present it to him as a gift, and he loved it. He even signed my bat."

Another of Zion's remarkable works is a diorama capturing Janelle Innis delivering a baby outside her workplace. "To see a woman giving birth by your work door and help deliver a baby is extraordinary, that is why I had to recreate that moment.

I heard about the story and how Janelle was honored by her American Airlines boss, Luis Montano, who flew into the island from Miami and gave her a special cape to honor her. Recently, I was told he returned to the island again and saw the diorama piece, loved it, admired the attention to detail, and enquired about me."

#Actor

# Interview with Zion Rose

## Art, Acting, and Heartfelt Stories

Zion also merges his love of sports into his artwork, creating a diorama of the Orlando Magic vs. LeBron James-led Lakers. "I think that sports is the new market for art. I am shifting some of my artwork into sports, but also fashion. My grandfather, Peter Rose, who died in 2022, was a big-time Lakers fan. This piece was also to honor him.“ The recognition of his work continues to grow. "To see the Orlando Magic reach out about my diorama shows my work is international. I felt elated."

Zion is also making strides in acting. He co-starred in the CG Insurance ICC World Cup campaign with Sir Curtly Ambrose. "Being in that campaign was a wonderful experience. Just interviewing Sir Curtly was fun. It was an experience I would never forget. Seeing him in person, not just on YouTube where I researched him for a week beforehand, made me feel happy and full of joy. And he’s really tall! The interview helped me learn about body language and how to think fast for on-screen acting."

His studies at the New York Film Academy have helped shape his acting career. "NYFA has helped me in so many ways. It taught me about self-tapes for auditions and commercial monologues. I even trained myself to speak with an American accent. What was really important for me was the international exposure that boosted my portfolio."

Balancing both art and acting is a challenge, but Zion is finding a way. "That Dunkin’ commercial exercise, as a pitchman, I placed 2nd out of 20 other kids. That gave me confidence that I can measure up with American kids. Balancing acting and art is challenging. If an opportunity happens and it’s about art, I take time from acting, but now I balance art on the weekends. As for acting, whenever an opportunity comes, I focus on that more during the week. I even take my lines to school, research the script, and develop my character."

Zion puts great care into his dioramas. "Creating a diorama is not a simple first thing. I need a foundation, then the texture, and the details. Every piece is important. Like the smallest amount of details matter. With a piece from the Orlando Magic set, the mascot Stuff is green with actual feathers and yellow nostrils. I had to do my research and use actual feathers, not cards, to give him that finishing touch.“ His goal is to tell powerful stories through his art. "The key is to look at sublime stories and their potential. My daddy was visiting Paris, and there is a Selima Optique store there. Trinity and I are brand ambassadors of Selima Optique, which sells fantastic unique sunnies and eyeglasses.

I decided to create a giant-sized Selima Optique sunglasses with their name in tiny alphabet pieces on one arm and my name on the next. Then I decorated it with pieces of Lego, toy pigs, and toy flowers to give it that unique spin. With Trin’s short film, Perturbed, I was in charge of the props and had to make them as realistic as possible because we have limited resources here."

Zion faces challenges in both art and acting but works hard to overcome them. "In acting, there are so many skills I have to know, like eye effect when reacting truthfully through your eyes. I had a challenge with my last role as a desperate bum. I needed to come off as annoying and threatening, but at first, I wasn’t. That was frustrating. I had to research people who are desperate and hungry.

Then, in rehearsals, the director, Trinity, made me follow my co-star, Shonnell Harewood, and beg for candy desperately. I couldn’t stop until she gave up the candy. And she did. It was intense. In art, I always get this problem with glue sticks. Too much glue makes my characters look messy. I’m learning to use smaller amounts and still get strong adhesion. It’s a process."

Looking ahead, Zion wants to expand into wearable art. "With my art, I’m looking into fashion, the accessory aspect of art. My future goals for acting are to be in international movies and series and to help young actors in Barbados and the Caribbean."

*His advice to young creatives is simple: "Don’t let people stop you when you feel like nothing is happening. Have faith, work on your skills, and never give up."Zion Rose is just getting started, and the world is watching.*

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#Pageant

# Interview with Sarah Louw

## Mrs. South Africa 2025 Semi-finalist

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Sarah Louw is not just a Mrs. South Africa semi-finalist; she is a woman on a mission. As the CEO of LNS Group, an advocate for accessible healthcare, and a mother, she is proving that leadership and compassion can go hand in hand. For her, the Mrs. South Africa competition is more than a beauty pageant—it is a platform for real change.

"I entered Mrs. South Africa because I believe women can be both powerful and feminine—leaders in boardrooms and nurturers at home," Sarah says. "This platform gives voice to that duality. It's not just a pageant—it's a movement of women who are changemakers, community builders, and unapologetically ambitious."

Balancing leadership, advocacy, and family is no small task, but Sarah takes it in stride. "Honestly? There's no such thing as perfect balance—it's about intentional alignment. I'm clear on my mission, and everything I do—whether it's running LNS Group, advocating for patients, or raising my kids—is centred around purpose and impact. I schedule fiercely, protect my energy, and lean on an incredible team both at home and at work. Also, coffee helps. A lot."

Her drive to make healthcare more accessible comes from personal experience with the flaws in the system. "I've seen what happens when vulnerable people fall through the cracks. I've looked into the eyes of mothers who didn't know if their child would make it because a theatre wasn't functional. That lights a fire in me. No one should suffer because of red tape or broken systems. I built LNS Group to be part of the solution—to turn admin into action and give people a fighting chance."

Sarah explains that one of the biggest issues in South Africa's healthcare system is access. "We have incredible doctors, but the system is overwhelmed and under-resourced. Paperwork delays treatment, compliance gets messy, and the most vulnerable are often the least supported. LNS Group steps in where chaos exists—we bring structure, speed, and strategy. We streamline everything from patient placement to claim processing so that care doesn't get delayed because of a missing form."

*Motherhood has played a significant role in shaping Sarah's approach to leadership. "Motherhood made me fierce—but also deeply empathetic. It taught me to lead with both spine and heart. Every time I advocate for a patient, I imagine it's my own child or parent. That perspective changes everything. It's not about numbers on a spreadsheet—it's about dignity, humanity, and the kind of care every person deserves."*

The phrase "More Than a Crown" holds deep meaning for Sarah. "It's a reminder that true influence isn't worn—it's lived. It's not about how you look in a sash; it's what you do with the Mrs. South Africa platform. It means showing up when no one's watching, making hard decisions, and pushing through setbacks because someone else's life might depend on your action. The crown is a symbol—but the legacy is built in the work and sisterhood forged in the journey."

Her work has already changed lives. "There was a young man involved in a horrific accident who was turned away from multiple hospitals due to lack of resources. We facilitated his transfer within hours, secured funding, and made sure he got the surgery he needed. Months later, his mom sent a video of him walking unaided. That moment—seeing a life restored because we didn't give up—still gets me emotional. That's why I do this."

Pageantry, for Sarah, is a tool for social change. "Mrs. South Africa's platform gives visibility. And when you pair that visibility with intention—you get change. Empowering women through their own growth and journey enables strength, courage, and intention. This allows for raised awareness and shows women that you can lead, nurture, and glow—all at once. My message is simple: You're not too much. You're exactly what the world needs."

She encourages women to use their platforms for advocacy. "Start where you are. You don't need millions or a microphone—you need conviction. Speak up. Volunteer. Share resources with your sisters. Ask questions. You'd be surprised how powerful consistent, purposeful action can be. And don't wait to feel 'ready'—impact doesn't wait for perfection."

For Sarah, the most rewarding part of her journey has been connection. "I am the connector in my professional capacity. It's seeing something and refusing to accept that 'that's just how it is' and this journey being the connection for me so that I can connect with like-minded sisters also hungry to create those connections for the betterment of something more than just themselves."

Her future goals are ambitious. "I want to scale access—digitally, operationally, through partnerships and legislation. We're building platforms that make healthcare logistics smarter, faster, and more compassionate. I want to be part of reshaping how public-private healthcare partnerships function, so that no patient is penalized for being poor. Long-term? I want to help shape policy. Because sustainable impact needs both heart and law."

Sarah invites others to support her mission. "Start by caring. Then connect. Whether you're a doctor, admin, donor, or just someone with time—you can help. Follow our work, share our message, or simply be a voice in your own community. Healthcare access is a human right. Let's treat it like one—together."

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# Micayla Powell

#Talent

# Interview with Micayla Powell

## Galloping Toward Greatness

Micayla Powell has always had a love for animals, but horses hold a special place in her heart. "I loved the film Spirit, and I was seven years old when I first started riding," she says. That early passion turned into a major achievement when she was selected to represent the Mpumalanga team at Nationals in 2024. "The freedom you feel when you sit on such a majestic animal is what I love most about horse riding."

*Riding is more than just a sport for her; it's a deep connection between rider and horse. "Horses are such intelligent and intuitive animals. They feel everything you feel, and the bond you create with them is something truly special." She spends countless hours training and caring for her horse, Cosmic Moment, forming a partnership built on trust and understanding. "He is my best friend. Being able to share important moments with him makes everything even more meaningful."*

Beyond horse riding, Micayla is also drawn to photographic modeling. She enjoys the creativity it allows, saying, "I think the fact that you can try new ideas and experiment with different styles is definitely what I love most." Despite her love for being in front of the camera, she admits it isn't always easy. "I am always very nervous! But after a few photos, I relax and live in the moment."

She has never competed in a pageant before but is open to the idea. "I think if a pageant really catches my attention, I would definitely consider entering," she shares. However, when it comes to photoshoots, she has a clear favorite style. "I definitely like lifestyle photoshoots! Here I can showcase my hobbies and the things I truly love."

When asked about her inspirations, Micayla admires supermodel Bella Hadid. "She can somehow be fierce and elegant at the same time." She also finds ways to express her personality in her shoots. "I once did a shoot with my horse in this amazing blue dress...with my riding boots underneath. I think I always try to keep something authentic and true to myself in all my photos."

Modeling is not just about taking pictures for her; she wants to make an impact. "If I ever have the chance to model more regularly, I would like to inspire others who do not have the 'perfect' figures or think they have flaws into believing that being different is what makes you unique."

One of her most memorable photoshoots was with her horse, Cosmic Moment. "I felt like the character in Tangled, Rapunzel on her horse Maximus." That shoot perfectly combined her two passions—horses and modeling. "It was so natural, and I felt completely in my element. The connection between me and Cosmic Moment really showed in the pictures."

If given the chance to do a dream photoshoot anywhere in the world, Micayla has one place in mind. "I would love to do a shoot in Hawaii! To me, it's such a beautiful place—the white beaches and blue waters. What's not to love?" She imagines herself riding along the shoreline, capturing breathtaking shots that combine elegance and adventure. "The idea of being in nature, with the ocean behind me and the wind in my hair, is just magical."

Balancing school, hobbies, and modeling can be a challenge, but she has found a way to make it work. "School is always important. I am privileged enough to attend a homeschooling tutor center, which makes it a bit more flexible. After that, just stick to your schedule and that's it." She believes in staying organized and prioritizing responsibilities. "As long as you manage your time well, you can do the things you love without feeling overwhelmed."

When it comes to style, comfort is key, but she also believes in dressing according to the theme of a shoot. "I do not particularly like wearing dresses, but a long, beautiful dress just makes the most amazing photos, so in most photoshoots, there will always be a dress in my favorite colors—red, black, or blue." She embraces versatility in her wardrobe choices, making sure her outfits reflect her personality while enhancing the vision of the shoot. "I believe fashion should be fun and expressive. It's about feeling confident in what you wear." Her advice for young people interested in modeling is simple: "Always stay true to who you are!" She believes confidence is the most important quality a model can have. "You don't need to change yourself to fit a certain look. Just be yourself, and people will appreciate your authenticity."

When preparing for a photoshoot, she keeps things straightforward. "The outfit always gets picked first. My hair and makeup will always be simple but complementing. I really just get up, get dressed, and get going." She prefers natural makeup looks that highlight her features rather than completely changing them. "I like to enhance my natural beauty instead of covering it up."

If she could model for any brand or magazine, Micayla already knows which one she would choose. "If I could choose a brand to model for, it would be Le Mieux. It's a dream of mine to someday be an ambassador for an equestrian brand or magazine." She hopes to combine her love for horse riding and modeling in a meaningful way. "Being able to represent something I am passionate about would be an incredible opportunity."

Whether in the saddle or in front of the camera, Micayla Powell is carving out her own path, staying true to herself, and inspiring others along the way. With her love for horses, her dedication to modeling, and her belief in embracing individuality, she is proving that passion and authenticity can lead to remarkable opportunities. The journey is only beginning, and she is excited to see where it takes her next.

Instagram: @the_original_blond_horse_girl_

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# Megan

## Megan Davies Is Stepping Into Her Power — And the Spotlight Is Following

Instagram: @megxdaviess
Facebook: Megan Davies
Agency: @vmodelssa
Photographer: Redvine photography

#Model

# Interview with Megan Davies

## Confidence, Creativity & Courage

Megan Davies has always admired the world of modeling. From a young age, she was drawn to creativity and self-expression but never thought she would actually pursue it. "I used to be quite shy," she admits, "but stepping into modeling helped me come out of my shell and build real confidence."

Her journey began with small collaborations with local businesses, giving her the first taste of life in front of the camera. "From there, I realised how much I genuinely enjoyed it—expressing different sides of myself, learning along the way, and growing both personally and professionally. It made me want to pursue it more seriously and see how far I could go."

Her time at V-Models has played a big role in shaping her into the model she is today. "The training pushed me out of my comfort zone and taught me how to carry myself with confidence, especially on the runway. I've learned the importance of discipline, presentation, and how to express myself in front of a camera. Being surrounded by passionate and supportive people also helped me believe in myself more and continue pushing toward my goals."

Now, as a finalist for Opulent Models 2025, Megan is taking her career to the next level. "It honestly feels surreal. Being chosen as a finalist is such an exciting moment in my journey, and I'm truly grateful for the opportunity. It's a reminder that the hard work and dedication are paying off, and it motivates me to keep growing, learning, and giving my best in every step forward." Competing in Opulent Models 2025 has brought its own challenges and excitement. "The most difficult part so far has been mentally and physically preparing to make sure I'm in the best shape for the competition, as well as finding the right outfits for the upcoming MOPA party. It's been a challenge balancing everything, but it's all part of the process. The most exciting part has definitely been the journey itself—getting ready, learning more about myself, and preparing for what's to come."

*Among all types of modeling, Megan has a clear favorite. "I enjoy runway the most. There's something powerful about walking with purpose, showcasing a designer's vision, and fully embodying the mood of a collection. It's not just about walking, it's about storytelling through movement and presence. Every step feels like a performance, and I love the energy, the atmosphere, and the confidence it brings out in me."*

She takes her preparation seriously, focusing on both physical and mental well-being. "Skincare is a big part of my routine—I make sure to exfoliate, stay hydrated, and use a calming face mask the night before to give my skin a healthy glow. Light stretching or movement helps me feel more energized and in tune with my posture. I try to eat light, nourishing meals and drink plenty of water to feel refreshed from within. For me, preparation is also about mindset—when I feel good, I carry that energy with me onto the set or runway."

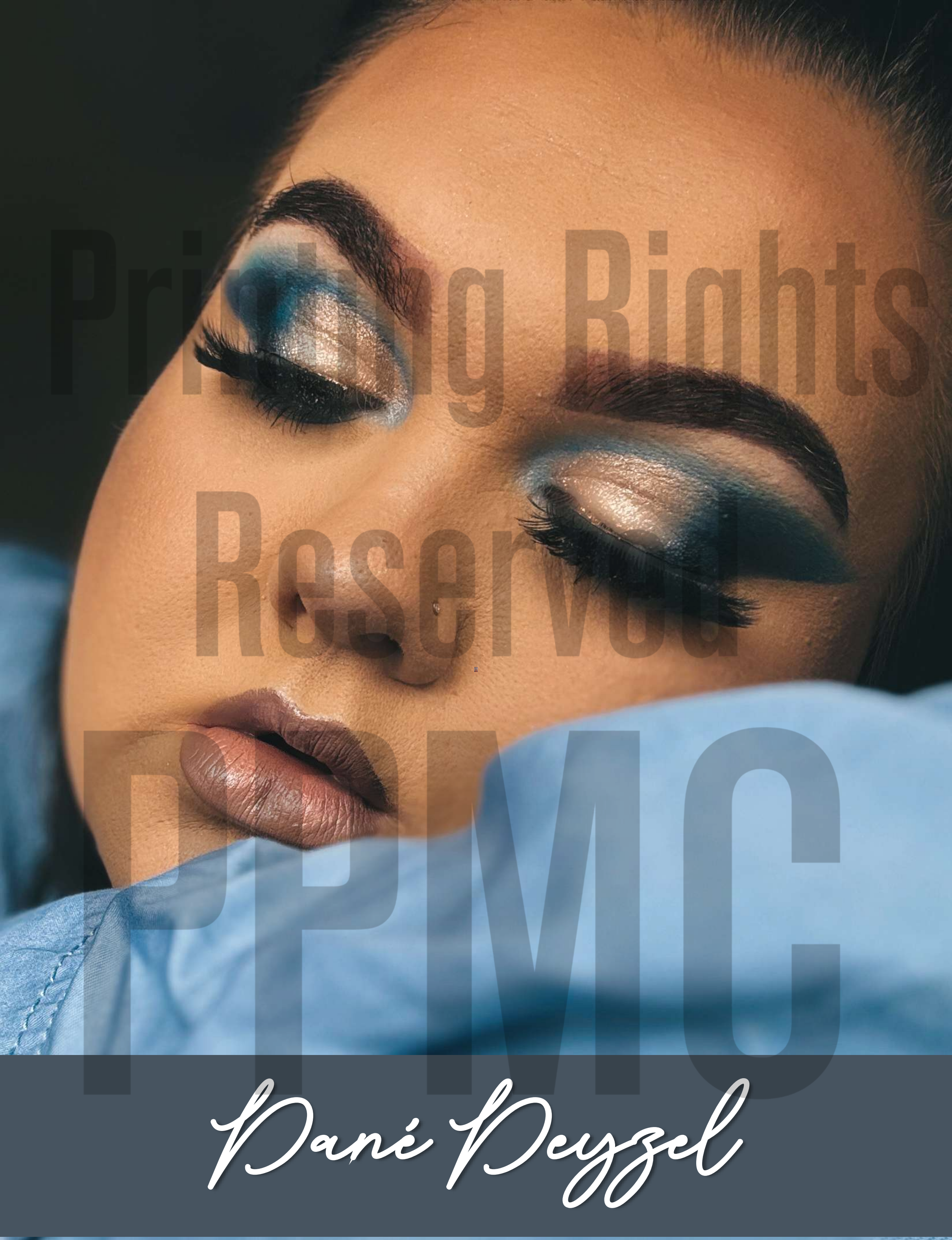
Confidence is a key part of being a model, and Megan has developed her own ways to stay poised. "For me, confidence comes down to mindset, presence, and preparation. I've learned to carry myself with intention—standing tall, moving with purpose, and letting my body language speak even before I do. Before walking or shooting, I take a deep breath, channel a confident version of myself, and remind myself why I'm there. Nerves still happen, but I've learned to treat them as part of the excitement. The more I show up, the more natural confidence starts to feel." She looks up to industry legends like Naomi Campbell and Tyra Banks. "Naomi's powerful walk and longevity in the industry have truly set the standard for supermodels. She has a way of owning every runway she steps on. Tyra, on the other hand, not only dominated the runway but also brought industry knowledge to the mainstream, emphasizing the importance of branding and personality. She showed that being a model is about more than just looks—it's about creating a unique identity and connecting with people on a deeper level."

One of the biggest lessons she has learned is to trust herself. "In this industry, it's easy to compare yourself to others or doubt your potential, but I've realized that confidence comes from within. The more I believed in myself and focused on my own growth, the more I started to see progress, not just in my modeling, but in how I carry myself in everyday life too."

She has big dreams for the future and already knows who she would love to work with. "If I could model for any designer, it would be Vera Wang. Her designs embody elegance and edge, making every piece feel timeless yet bold. For a fashion brand, I'd choose Louis Vuitton. It represents luxury with an iconic, rebellious spirit, and every campaign feels like a statement. Each of them has a distinct identity, and modeling for either would be an incredible honor."

Outside of modeling, Megan enjoys the arts, especially singing. "It's a creative outlet that brings me a lot of joy and helps me express myself in a different way. I also enjoy spending time with loved ones and just taking moments to unwind and be present."

She has a clear vision for her future. "In the next five years, I see myself working internationally, building a strong portfolio with both runway and photographic work. I want to be part of campaigns that reflect diversity and creativity, and to keep growing as a professional in the industry. I also hope to inspire others who may have started off shy like I did—to show them that with hard work and believing in yourself, you really can turn your passion into something powerful."

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#Makeup

# Interview with Dané Deyzel

## One Bold Look at a Time

For Dané, makeup is more than just a profession; it's a creative outlet that blossomed out of the most unexpected time—during the COVID-19 lockdown. "Makeup has always been something I've shown great interest in," she shares. "It all started with watching TikTok videos during COVID, and I then decided to try it out myself. The passion and interest for makeup just flourished from there."

*Her first gig in the industry was a mix of excitement and nerves. "It was pure excitement, yet still nerve-wracking," she recalls. "At that point, I was still figuring out my makeup style, and it taught me how to connect with future clients.*

*Overall, it was a massive learning curve for the start of my career." That first experience marked the beginning of a journey where Dané would refine her skills, develop a signature style, and grow as an artist.*

When asked about her approach to makeup, Dané describes it in two words: "Bold and Bling." She enjoys experimenting with different techniques and trends, always ready to step outside her comfort zone. "I find myself exploring in between all the different types of trends," she adds. Whether it's a dramatic look or a more natural one, she feels confident creating both. "My favorite makeup looks to recreate are anything dramatic, but I can comfortably recreate natural looks as well."

To stay current in the fast-moving beauty world, Dané keeps a close eye on social media for the latest trends and products. "I often rely on social media to see what's happening in and around the makeup/beauty industry," she says. This constant flow of new ideas keeps her excited about the possibilities.

One of the key aspects of her work is approaching each client's unique features. "As a makeup artist, approaching each client's unique features is key to creating a look that not only enhances their beauty but also reflects their personality and style," Dané explains. She focuses on listening and understanding the client's expectations, assessing their features, and highlighting their natural beauty. "It's all about customizing the look based on my observations and their desires." A memorable moment in her career was the day she qualified from Eloise Professional Makeup Academy. "That day was such a big milestone for me," she says with pride.

Like many artists, Dané faces challenges in an industry that's highly competitive. "It's an extremely competitive field because there are so many amazingly talented artists," she admits. "Some days are more challenging than others, but I remind myself that my style or manner of makeup isn't the same as the next makeup artist." She's also learned to recognize and play to her own strengths. "I make myself aware of what my strengths are in the field and what skills I have to offer."

Handling client satisfaction is crucial in her work. "I'm a perfectionist by nature, so communication during the process is mandatory for me," she says. Dané ensures she has enough time in each appointment to make adjustments if needed, and clear communication before and during the process is key. "It's all about ensuring complete satisfaction from my client."

When it comes to products, Dané swears by several brands that she trusts in her work. "I love Eloise Professional Cosmetics, Catrice, Revolution, Fenty, Huda Beauty, Essence, Maybelline, and the list goes on," she lists with enthusiasm. For those interested in pursuing makeup artistry, Dané has some advice: "Just go for it!" she says with conviction. "If you have the passion for it, you'll find your way."

Looking to the future, Dané is driven by big goals. "The goal is to master new techniques and trends, expand into high-profile work, and work on many creative collaborations," she shares. "Because I believe I have what it takes." As she always says, "I am the girl I think I am."

*And with her talent, determination, and vision, it's clear that Dané is ready to take the makeup world by storm.*

# Trinity Rose

Trinity Rose is a name that is quickly making waves in both the fashion and film industries. With her new fashion line, Trinity Rose Style, she has captured the essence of creativity and artistic expression. When asked about the inspiration behind her fashion line, she said, "My new fashion line plays an eccentric component to me as a young creative woman and a lover of arts and color."

Her journey into fashion began with a doll fashion line in late summer 2024, an idea suggested by her brother, Zion. "I was frustrated, wanting to learn how to design clothes but not knowing where to start. Zion told me to start small, then do something big," she recalled. That simple advice led her to design a unique collection inspired by film genres and different time periods.

The opportunity to gift one of her creations to Mitya Hontarenko and PLNGNS at Berlin Fashion Week was a surreal moment. "When I saw videos of Mitya receiving my gift, I jumped up and down and almost screamed!" she shared. The outfit she wore in her PPMC Magazine shoot embodies her artistic movement for young designers, incorporating graffiti elements and flower accessories to create an aura of mystique and love.

Balancing her passion for fashion with her filmmaking career is a challenge, but Trinity embraces it with enthusiasm. "I love to be busy, especially when it comes to the creative field with art and film," she said. Her work schedule is intense, often requiring her to juggle multiple projects at once. "I had to write the script for 'Perturbed' while doing rehearsals, learning lines, and making a skirt—all at the same time!" she recalled, laughing at the chaos.

'Perturbed' is a deeply personal project for Trinity, where she not only wrote and directed but also starred alongside her brother Zion. "Zion and I are best friends even as siblings. On set, we are very professional, like business partners who share a vision," she said. The film was born out of frustration after receiving critical feedback on a theater performance. "I started crying, not out of sadness, but out of desperation to prove them wrong," she admitted. That emotional turmoil fueled her creativity, and with the support of her father and manager, Corie Rose, she turned her emotions into art.

The film was shot in a single day with a mix of industry veterans and newcomers. "We even had my mom, Suzanne Rose, as wardrobe and Shera as makeup. It was a true collaborative effort," she said. The project was supported by sponsorships and donations from the National Cultural Foundation, Frosteez Ice Cream, and Bajon Chicken, among others.

The film's message highlights the importance of understanding mental health and the impact of anguish and desperation on individuals.

#Actor

# Interview with Trinity Rose

## From Doll Designs to Global Dreams

Trinity's hard work has paid off, with 'Perturbed' being accepted into the Caribbean Film Festival. "Since 2022, I always wanted to submit to a film festival. Now, for God to give me this opportunity in 2025 is a reminder to never give up," she said. She hopes the film will win awards and showcase Barbados' growing potential in the global film industry. "Caribbean Hollywood!" she exclaimed excitedly.

Beyond film and fashion, Trinity has had the honor of engaging with influential figures like Roger Nyhus, Lilian Chatterjee, and Kayoko Fukushima. "Meeting them gave us new confidence and courage," she shared. One of her proudest moments was showing her doll fashion line to former US ambassador Nyhus. "That moment gave me a new level of confidence for February 2025 when we launched Trinity Rose Style," she said.

Her talents also extend to screenwriting, with six screenplays under her belt, including 'Untitled Crop Over.' "The idea came to me during a business studies class. I wrote 40 plot ideas, determined to create something special," she explained.

When and important entity requested a submission, she felt pressured but excited. "I was juggling multiple projects, but I knew this was an opportunity I couldn't pass up," she said.

Studying filmmaking at the New York Film Academy was another major milestone. "It was amazing! I was extremely nervous at first, but the experience was better than expected," she said. During the program, she directed her short film, 'Panic,' which helped refine her technical skills. "Attending NYFA was a blessing, and I'm grateful to Carol Roberts and the National Cultural Foundation for making it possible," she said.

Trinity's achievements also include winning bronze at the 2023 NIFCA Performing Arts with her high school cast. "That was my first time acting on a stage at that level, and I was extremely nervous," she admitted. The experience taught her the importance of teamwork and supporting fellow cast members.

Despite her growing success, she acknowledges the challenges of balancing her creative passions with the business side of fashion and film. "I'm still learning a lot, especially about the business side of fashion," she said. College has added another layer of difficulty, but she remains committed to both her studies and her creative projects. "Sometimes I ask myself, 'Trin, should you write the script first or finish the assignment?' and I just split the time in half," she said with a shrug.

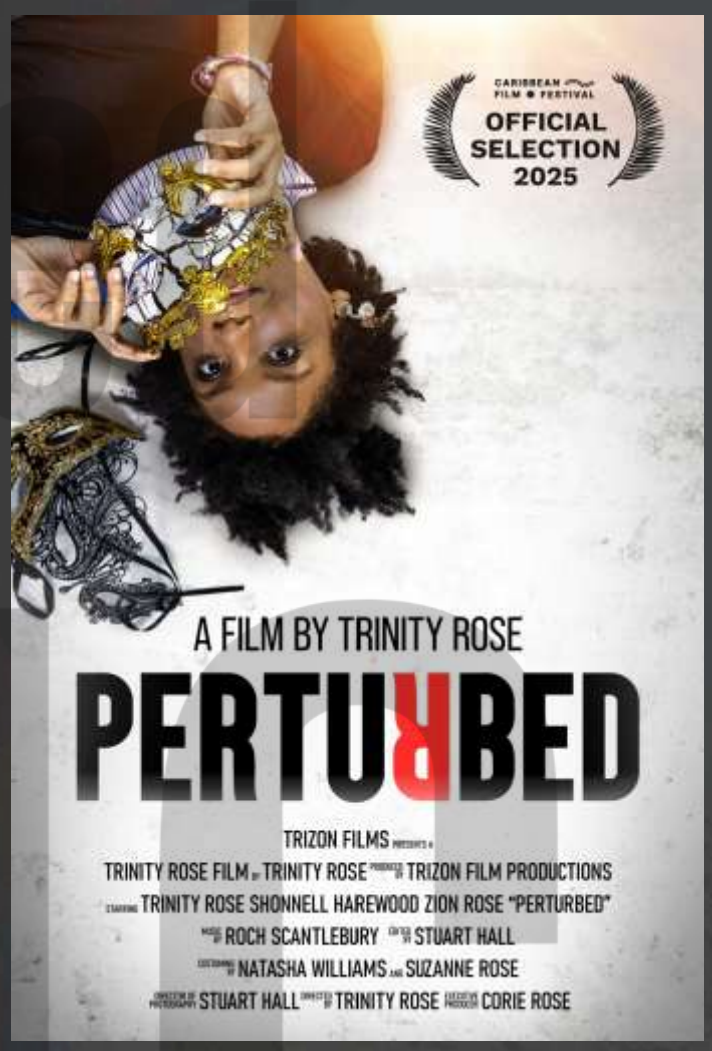
When it comes to storytelling, Trinity enjoys pushing boundaries. "I love working on topics I've never done before. Taking risks is exciting, even if it's nerve-wracking," she said. She has a concept in mind for a unique historical film about the transatlantic slave trade and hopes to one day pitch it to Netflix or Amazon.

Her background in fashion influences her filmmaking in many ways. "I love to visualize. Every time I write a character, I think about their costuming and how colors and details matter," she said. Even when she faced criticism for focusing too much on details, she stayed true to her vision. "I love what I do, and I won't compromise my artistic expression," she stated firmly.

Looking ahead, Trinity plans to expand Trinity Rose Style into a global brand, incorporating diverse fashion influences. "I love Berlin's fashion sense and the freedom of New York, but I'm also intrigued by South African afrofuturism. Each market has something special to offer," she said.

Her future in filmmaking is equally ambitious. "I want to write a game-changing screenplay that doesn't rely on fantasy but deals with real-world issues in a unique way," she shared. Her goal is to create impactful films that resonate with audiences worldwide.

With her unshakable determination and boundless creativity, Trinity Rose is proving that she is a force to be reckoned with. Whether in fashion or film, her name is one the world will remember.



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# Bejandri Lourens

#Pageant

# Interview with Bejandri Lourens

## A Voice for the Voiceless

Makeup and Hair Artist: @Tiaancoz
Photographer: HS. Media by Mr Spookels

For Bejandri Lourens, pageantry has never just been about tiaras and titles. It's a journey of self-growth, purpose, and impact. Her path into the industry started young, evolving from a childhood hobby into a powerful platform. With titles like Miss Ekurhuleni and Miss Queen of the World, her latest milestone—becoming a finalist for Miss Grand South Africa—feels like the perfect next step.

"The Miss Grand South Africa platform stood out to me because it doesn't just celebrate beauty; it highlights purpose and allows contestants to use their voices for change," she says. "Becoming a finalist has been one of the greatest honors of my journey so far."

Her voice is one she's putting to use far beyond the stage. Bejandri is the founder of JustBrave, a foundation dedicated to supporting women and children affected by violence. "The inspiration behind JustBrave came from a deep calling to support those who need it most," she explains. "Growing up, I saw both silent suffering and courageous healing. I knew I had to create something that gave survivors a voice and a safe space."

JustBrave is about breaking cycles of silence. "We want to provide emotional support, resources, and education to help survivors rebuild their confidence and reclaim their future. Most importantly, I want every woman and child we reach to know that their story matters."

Running the foundation has come with challenges—resources, time, and the emotional weight of the work. But Bejandri is undeterred. "I've learned to lean into my community and my faith. The support of those who believe in the mission has been a game-changer. Every obstacle becomes worth it when you remember who you're fighting for."

Pageantry has helped fuel her advocacy. "It's not just about the crown—it's about what you do with it. My foundation is a direct extension of the values I've embraced in pageantry: purpose, leadership, and impact. It's about using the spotlight to light the way for others."

Raising awareness is a major focus of JustBrave, with school outreach programs, social media initiatives, and partnerships with shelters and counselors. "By sharing survivor stories and expert insights, we aim to not only raise awareness but also drive action."

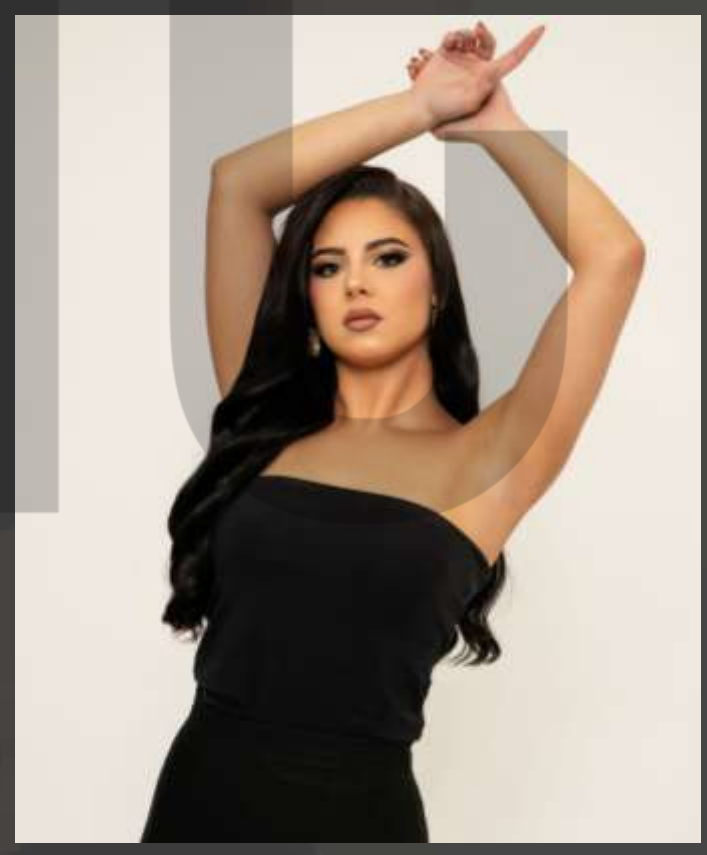
People looking to help can donate, share the message, or advocate within their own communities. "Just following our journey, attending events, or amplifying survivor voices can make a massive impact. Every small action helps build a louder movement."

Bejandri's role as a mentor goes beyond her foundation. As the owner of CGC Model Academy and Lush Events, she's passionate about confidence-building and empowering young girls through modeling. "I love mentorship. Seeing young girls find confidence in themselves is incredible."

Her motivation comes from heartbreaking stories, like that of little Joshlin, a child reportedly sold by her own mother. "It's a painful example of how broken our systems can be, and how urgently we need to step in—not only with awareness but with action. No child should ever be betrayed by the very people meant to protect them."

Looking ahead, Bejandri dreams of expanding JustBrave nationally, creating safe spaces and mentorship programs, and even launching a healing center for survivors. "The dream is big, but so is the purpose."

Her advice to young women who want to make a difference? "Start where you are, with what you have. Trust that your voice matters. You don't need to be perfect or have it all figured out—just take the first step. Be brave."



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